

Foster Care



Manual

Cats & Dogs



City of Seattle

Seattle Animal Shelter
2061 15th Ave. W.
Seattle, WA 98119

Foster Care Line: (206) 615-0737
Seattle Animal Control Main Line (206) 386-PETS
www.seattleanimalshelter.org

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Seattle Animal Shelter thanks the following people and organizations who provided training, support and/or documentation in developing this Foster Care Manual:

Dr. Harriet Blanton, DVM

Ellen Leach

Nancy Phillips

Karen Stone

The Humane Society for Seattle/King County

PAWS

The Pet Rescue Project of Contra Costa County

The San Francisco SPCA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

How the program works	3–5
Forms	6–7
Questions to ask potential adopters	9
Guidelines for seeking veterinary care	10
List of local vets	11–13
Guidelines for fostering cats	15
Feline upper respiratory infection	20
Feral cats	20
Guidelines for fostering kittens	23
Guidelines for fostering dogs	29
Introducing two dogs	31
Introducing a dog to a cat	31
Crate training	34
Kennel cough	37
Guidelines for fostering puppies	40
Poisonous household items	44

Foster Care Coordinators:

Arlene Ehrlich (Cats), Sandy Hansen (Cats), Idil Indra (Dogs), Anne Treadwell (Dogs)



WELCOME TO THE SEATTLE ANIMAL SHELTER FOSTER CARE PROGRAM

Thank you for opening your home to a shelter companion animal. In January of 1999, Seattle Animal Shelter started its foster care program in order to give young, injured, abused or under socialized animals a chance to grow or heal and eventually find permanent homes. During 1999 the foster care program saved almost 900 dogs and cats that would otherwise have been euthanized.

WHAT KIND OF ANIMALS NEED FOSTER HOMES

- Puppies or kittens too young to be adopted
- An abused dog or cat that needs socialization and tender loving care
- An injured dog or cat recovering from surgery
- A dog or cat with a cold or a cough
- An abandoned mother with a litter of kittens or puppies
- Young or injured rabbits, birds, snakes and iguanas
- Any animal when the shelter becomes overcrowded

VETERINARY CARE

Shelter volunteers raise money for the shelter's **Help the Animals Fund**, which pays for all veterinary bills and medicines. Foster parents are responsible for providing food and time (and lots of love!)

HOW DO PETS IN FOSTER CARE GET ADOPTED?

Photos and stories of all animals in foster care are posted on the www.petshelter.net web site. The public can view the animal via the web, call our voice mail, and arrange to meet the animal and foster parent. Foster parents with dogs may also participate in various programs led by volunteers, such as "Sundays in the Park" (the dogs wear adoption banners!) and our "Dog of the Day" program every Saturday and Sunday outside the shelter. All foster parents have the option of meeting potential adopters. After the foster parents and the foster care coordinator have agreed on a candidate, the foster parent fills out the FOSTER PARENT/POTENTIAL ADOPTER APPROVAL form (found in this manual), gives the signed form to the potential adopter and sends him/her down to the shelter to be interviewed by the staff.

If foster parents wonder whether potential adopters are best suited for their foster animal, or if foster parents find out that potential adopters do not meet the shelter requirements for adoption (they don't have a fenced in yard for a dog), they should tell the potential adopter that they have many other interested people to meet before foster parents and staff will be able to make their decision. Then foster parents should call the foster care coordinators or Virginia Dalton to ask for guidance.

The shelter staff interviews the potential adopters for FINAL approval; then pay fees and make a spay/neuter appointment. No animal can go to a potential adopter's home until the adoption is official with shelter staff. A foster parent may not place a foster animal in a new home; all adoptions **MUST** be approved by the shelter staff. Foster parents may also refer potential adopters to the shelter to complete an adoption application. Foster animals never have to go back to the shelter for long periods of time, although they do have to be spayed or neutered before adoption. They can get adopted straight from the foster parents' homes in some cases.



"Martha" was hit by a car and brought to the shelter.

Thanks to the **Help the Animals Fund** which paid for her surgery and to her foster parents who cared for her while she healed, Martha was adopted by a family and she is now healthy, happy and home at last!



CAN FOSTER PARENTS ADOPT THEIR FOSTER COMPANION ANIMAL?

You bet! As long as foster parents meet the shelter requirements that are necessary for adopting that animal, foster parents have first choice to adopt their foster pet.

HOW LONG DO ANIMALS STAY IN FOSTER HOMES?

It completely depends on the animal and situation: the average stay in a foster home is two–three weeks. However, some animals who have a great photo on the web stay only a few days and others who are recovering from an injury may stay for a few months.

ARE FOSTER ANIMALS CONTAGIOUS? WILL MY DOG'S OR CAT'S OR MY HEALTH BE JEOPARDIZED?

It is always a health risk to expose your animal to other animals, whether at the off-leash areas, the vet waiting room, or other common animal areas. But if the foster parents' own animals are current on their vaccinations, maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle, and are not elderly or very young—and therefore their immune systems are not compromised—then the health risk is minimal. If you or someone in your household are immune-compromised, consult your doctor before fostering. If you or someone in your household is pregnant, talk to your doctor before fostering cats. Working or living with animals exposes humans to a group of diseases called zoonoses. A zoonotic disease is defined as a disease transmitted from animals to humans and also from humans to animals. There are about 200 of these diseases. To find out more about them talk to your veterinarian. Proper hygiene, preventative measures and an understanding of these illnesses can reduce the risk of disease.

ARE FOSTER COMPANION ANIMALS EVER EUTHANIZED?

Much energy, love, time, and vet care is devoted to animals in foster care, and the shelter is committed to finding homes for ALL of these animals. If a foster parent decides to return their foster pet to the shelter before finding him/her a permanent home, foster parents can feel confident that the shelter will NOT euthanize the animal. If the animal becomes sick or the shelter becomes overcrowded, the shelter will find him/her another foster home. (This situation rarely happens unless the foster parents have to go out of town). Some animals are in foster care because they are seriously ill or injured...if, after medical attention, these animals are too young or too weak (such as young kittens) to heal and are suffering, then the shelter staff will humanely euthanize these animals. Fortunately, most animals in foster care heal beautifully.

GETTING STARTED: FOSTER CARE APPLICATIONS

All foster parents fill out a foster care application which asks questions that will help the foster care coordinators match foster parents up with the appropriate animal for their lifestyle. Foster care coordinators then contact foster parents to describe the animal in need, and a meeting at the shelter is scheduled. Foster parents who have dogs at home and are considering fostering a dog are encouraged to bring their dog(s) to the shelter so we can introduce the dogs outside and ensure a good match.

TIME COMMITMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Commitment and responsibilities depend on the situation and animal. Animals going into foster care have often been through much stress. It is essential that foster parents understand that moving the animal from the shelter to the foster home is also very stressful and emotional. These animals will depend on the foster parents for guidance through this adjustment period. (For example, adjustment periods for dogs can be anywhere from three days to three weeks.) Don't give up on a foster companion animal! Read through this manual and call your foster care coordinator for help. Foster parents must be willing to be patient and commit to these animals because our goal is to keep them in a stable and consistent environment. The sooner the animals feel secure, the sooner they will be adopted.



FREQUENCY	TYPE OF ANIMAL	WEEKS INVOLVED	DAILY HOURS
Most Common	Weaned Kittens	1–3 weeks	2
	URI Cats (see pg. 20)	2–3 weeks	1–2 hours
	Kittens with Mom	2–8 weeks	1–2 hours or more
	Injured Cats	1 week–2 months	1–2 hours
Least Common	Orphaned Kittens	6–8 weeks	Up to 8 hours
Most Common	Dogs with a cold	1–3 weeks	2–3 hours
	Weaned Puppies	1–3 weeks	3–6 hours
	Injured Dogs	1 week–2 months	2–3 hours
	Orphaned Puppies	6–8 weeks	8 hours
	Behavior Cases	1–3 weeks	2–4 hours
Least Common	Mom with Puppies	2–8 weeks	3 hours

If additional health problems develop, daily hour commitments may be extended. For example, foster parents may have to transport their foster animals to the vet during regular business hours.

WHERE SHOULD YOUR FOSTER PET STAY WHILE AT YOUR HOME?

Cats/Kittens **Indoors only (do not let your foster cat/kitten outdoors)**—box, crate, separate room (bathroom, laundry room, or closet), or warm and dry garage

Dogs Indoors—crate, warm and dry garage. When outdoors, **dogs should be on a leash at all times**, unless you go to a securely fenced off-leash area. Please note that you should not take a contagious dog to an off-leash area. Also, you are responsible for the safety and well-being of your foster dog: Do not let your foster dog off-leash unless you are sure that he/she will come when called. Since we are often unsure of your foster dog's past, do not let him/her off-leash unless you are sure that he/she gets along with other strange dogs. Foster dogs should not be put in a position of possibly fighting with a strange dog.

Puppies Indoors—kitchen (you may want baby gates), bathroom, laundry room (puppies should be around humans for socialization purposes and **should not be isolated**), warm and dry garage. Outdoors— only if supervised by an adult. Puppies should NEVER go to off-leash areas because they are not fully vaccinated.

Foster Parents meet all potential adopters.



I HAVE BEEN IN A FOSTER HOME...

**THIS IS WHAT MY FOSTER PARENTS
SAY ABOUT WONDERFUL ME!**

Animal's name _____

Foster parent's name/Contact info (optional) _____

Type of food used _____

Feeding schedule _____

Amount of food _____

Housetrained/Litter box trained _____

Neutered/Spayed _____

Known medical history/vaccinations _____

Exercise regimen (Dogs) _____

Known commands (Dogs) _____

Personality Traits _____

Behavior with small children and other animals _____

Favorite toys _____

Other _____



FOSTER PARENT/POTENTIAL ADOPTER APPROVAL

FOSTER PARENT:

1. FILL OUT THIS FORM.
2. GIVE THIS FORM TO THE POTENTIAL ADOPTERS WHO ARE THE PERFECT MATCH FOR YOUR ANIMAL.
3. HAVE THEM GIVE THE FORM TO THE SHELTER STAFF WHEN THEY ARE INTERVIEWED.

My foster animal and I have met (name of potential adopter) _____
and feel that he/she/they are the perfect match for my foster animal. (Please note: the staff has the final decision on where the shelter animals are placed. They reserve the right to turn down potential adopters if shelter adoption requirements are not met.)

I am therefore sending him/her/them down to the shelter to be interviewed by shelter staff, to pay the adoption, licensing, and spay/neuter fees, and to schedule a spay/neuter appointment.

★ **Shelter staff: please call me at the following number** _____
so that I know the adoption has been finalized. Then I will call the adopter and arrange a time to hand over my foster animal.

My foster animal's name is

My foster animal's case # is

Shelter hours

Tues–Sat, noon–6 p.m. and Sun, noon–4p.m.

Phone numbers

(206) 386-4292

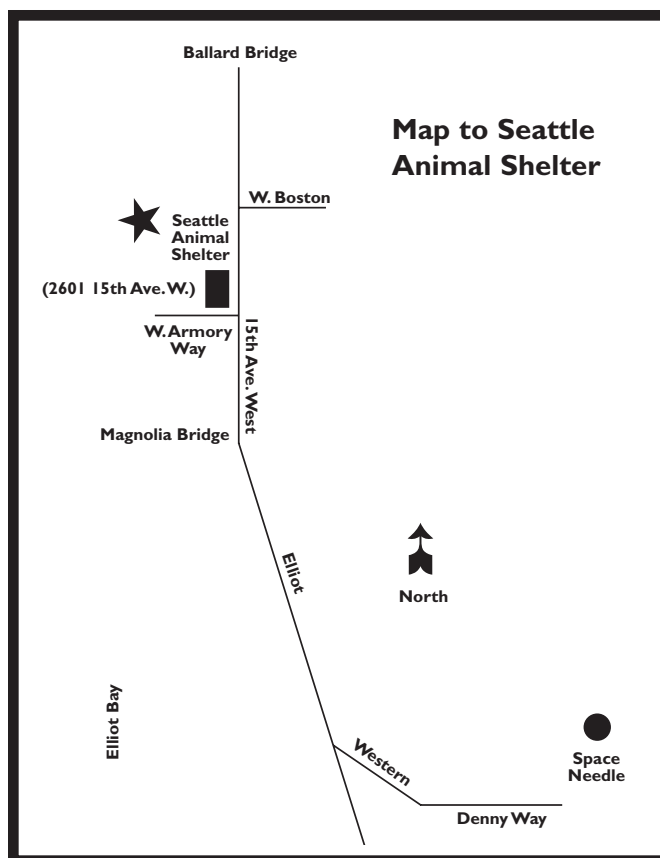
Virginia Dalton, Shelter Supervisor

(206) 386-4294 Adoption Desk

Tues–Sat, noon–6 p.m. and Sun, noon–4p.m.

(206) 386-4293 Supply Room/Volunteer Desk

(206) 386-4254 EXT. 2 SAC Main Number



GUIDELINES FOR DECIDING WHETHER YOUR ANIMAL IS HEALTHY AND READY TO BE ADOPTED

- Did the puppies/kittens gain enough weight?
- Are the animals healthy and recovered fully from the illness?
- Are they successfully weaned from their mother?
- Have they been successfully socialized?
- Is there room at the shelter? (call (206) 386-4294 Tues-Sat, noon-6pm or Sun, noon-4pm to find out) Or keep your foster animal until the right person comes along and sees him/her on the PetShelterNetwork web site!

BRINGING YOUR FOSTER ANIMAL BACK TO THE SHELTER

If you decide it is time to bring your foster animal back to the shelter, contact your foster care coordinator to arrange a day and time for you to return your foster pet to the shelter. Because of your close contact and attachment to the animal, you will be able to describe any special personality traits and features, habits, routines, etc. Fill out the "I HAVE BEEN IN A FOSTER HOME" form on page 6 and clip it to the kennel. You can also paste any photos of your beloved foster animal to the card for the potential adopter to see. You are welcome to place your phone number on your foster animal's cage card so that you can keep in contact and answer future questions—and possibly exchange Christmas cards!

HOW TO SPAY/NEUTER YOUR FOSTER ANIMAL

Most foster animals will be spayed/neutered prior to going to their new homes. At the time of adoption, the adopters will be told when their foster animal is scheduled to be spayed/neutered. If the foster parent and adopter agree, the foster parent may drop the foster animal off at the spay/neuter clinic the morning of the scheduled surgery. This will prevent the animal from having to spend the night at the shelter prior to the day of surgery. The adopters will then call the spay/neuter clinic at 386-4260 around 2:00 that afternoon to find out when they can proceed to pick their new pet up. No animal will be given to an adopter by a foster parent prior to the spay/neuter surgery without the consent of shelter staff. It may be necessary for an adopter to pay a deposit and have the surgery scheduled for a later date under some circumstances. (Animals weighing under two pounds, lingering signs of illness which prevent the surgery from being done safely, limited number of openings for dog surgeries).

There are some circumstances under which spaying/neutering while in the foster parents' care would be beneficial, either behaviorally or physically. If you feel that your foster animal should be spayed/neutered, please call Virginia Dalton at (206)386-4292 to determine if the spay/neuter should be scheduled.

QUESTIONS TO ASK POTENTIAL ADOPTERS - "FIND A HOME EVEN BETTER THAN YOURS!"

If your foster animal has been seen on the internet or if you have the opportunity to meet the potential adopter of your foster animal...here are some of the shelter's favorite questions to ask that will help you decide whether the potential adopter's lifestyle is best suited for your foster animal and whether he/she/they will be able to provide a good home for your beloved foster pet. The shelter has heard foster parents say that their goal is to find a home even better than theirs! Don't hesitate to call your foster care coordinator at (206) 615-0737 or Virginia Dalton at (206) 386-4292 to ask for assistance and guidance.



QUESTIONS TO ASK POTENTIAL ADOPTERS

1. Where will the animal sleep? (A red flag would be: “outside” or “in the garage.” The shelter does not adopt out dogs to be guard dogs.)
2. How many hours will he/she be alone during the day? (A red flag would be 9-10 hours every day for five days in a row.) Where will the pet be while you are away from the house? (outside/inside?)
3. Why are you interested in meeting this particular animal? (Watchdog, house pet, companion, for children, hunter, gift, companion for other pet?)
4. Do you have dogs? If so, how many and what breed and sex are they? (Ask to meet their animals.)
5. Do you have cats?
6. Have you had dogs/cats before?
7. If so, what kind of breeds were they? And what happened to them? (A red flag would be: “I gave him/her away.” They will very likely do it again!)
8. Where will the animal stay when you go on vacation?
9. For a dog: Do you plan to take the whole family to behavioral classes?
10. Do you have children? What ages?
12. Who in the household will be responsible for the pet’s care?
13. What do you expect yearly veterinary costs will be for this pet?
14. What kind of housing do you live in?
15. For a dog: Do you have a fenced in yard? If so, how high is the fence?
16. For a dog: How would you exercise the dog?
17. For a cat: Will the cat be kept indoors? (The shelter encourages adopters to keep all cats indoors.)



Volunteer favorite, “Bandit”



PROVIDING VETERINARY CARE

Shelter volunteers raise money for a non-profit vet care fund called **Help the Animals Fund**. Thanks to much hard work, the fund is constantly growing and was created to pay for vet care for the homeless, injured and sick animals in foster homes. However, the fund is not substantial and should be used only when necessary. Use the following guides written by a veterinarian or call your foster care coordinator at (206) 615-0737 or Virginia Dalton at (206) 386-4292 to determine whether your foster animal needs medical attention. All veterinary care must be pre-authorized. If it is determined that vet care is necessary and a visit is authorized, please use one of the pre-approved vets listed in this manual who will then bill the shelter directly. **The shelter has a policy that it will not reimburse individuals for vet bills for foster animals.**

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR SEEKING VETERINARY CARE:

Cats or Dogs younger than 9 months must see a vet for

- Diarrhea that lasts for more than a day
- Vomiting and diarrhea for more than 6 hours
- Vomiting more than once in an hour
- Not eating for more than 12-24 hours
- Lethargy without fever for more than 12 hours
- Lethargy with fever

Dogs older than 9 months must see a vet for

- Diarrhea that lasts for more than 1-2 days
- Diarrhea and occasional vomiting for more than a day
- Vomiting more than 2-3 times in an hour
- Not eating for more than 24 hours
- Lethargy without fever for more than a day
- Lethargy with fever

Cats older than 9 months must see a vet for

- Not drinking for more than 24 hours
- Diarrhea that lasts for more than 1-2 days
- Diarrhea and occasional vomiting for more than a day
- Vomiting more than 2-3 times in an hour
- Not eating for more than 2-3 days
- Lethargy without fever for more than 2-3 days
- Lethargy with fever



"Gracie" was thrown against a wall by a teenager...and suffered from back injuries when she arrived at the shelter. While in foster care, she received medical attention, some good R & R, and lots of love. Thanks to posting her photo on the PetShelterNetwork web site, we found a wonderful, permanent home for Gracie!



LOCAL VETERINARIAN LIST

Once a veterinary visit has been authorized, call to make an appointment at any of the following vet offices. Bring your foster animal's Seattle Animal Shelter Case Number with you to the vet appointment so that the vet will bill the shelter directly for any expenses. Please let your foster care coordinator know which vet office you visited and on which date. PLEASE NOTE THAT EMERGENCY/NIGHT TIME CLINICS ARE INCREDIBLY EXPENSIVE AND SHOULD ONLY BE USED IN CASES OF DIRE EMERGENCIES. Please arrange to have your foster animal seen by a vet during regular business hours so that the shelter can save money on vet bills and therefore save more animals' lives.

Non-Emergency Veterinarians

ALDERWOOD COMPANION ANIMAL HOSPITAL (425)775-7655
1901 I 36TH AVENUE W., SUITE C LYNNWOOD
M,TH 8AM-8PM,TU,W,F 8AM-7PM, SAT 8AM-4PM

BROADWAY VETERINARY HOSPITAL (206)322-5444
1824 12TH AVENUE (12TH & DENNY) SEATTLE (Capitol Hill)
M-SAT 8AM-7PM

CARKEEK PARK VETERINARY HOSPITAL (206)789-8505
9756 HOLMAN ROAD NW SEATTLE (Ballard)
M-F 9AM-6PM, SAT 9AM-2PM

CROWN HILL VETERINARY HOSPITAL (206)782-6363
9069 HOLMAN ROAD NW SEATTLE (Ballard)
M-F 7AM-7PM, SAT 8AM-5PM, SUN 10AM-5PM

GREEN LAKE ANIMAL HOSPITAL (206)524-6540
6857 WOODLAWN AVENUE NE SEATTLE (Greenlake)
M-F 8AM-6PM, SAT 8AM-5PM

INTERBAY ANIMAL HOSPITAL (206)282-1961
3040 16TH AVENUE W SEATTLE (Between Magnolia/Queen Anne/Downtown)
M-F 9AM-6PM, SAT 9AM-2PM

LAKE FOREST PARK ANIMAL HOSPITAL (206)363-5656
16815 BOTHELL WAY NE LAKE FOREST PARK
M-F 8AM-5:30PM
SAT 8AM-11:30AM



LIEN ANIMAL CLINIC 3710 SW ALASKA M,W,TH 9AM–7PM, TU 7:30AM–7PM, F 9AM–5:30 PM SAT 9AM–12PM	(206)932-1133 WEST SEATTLE
MADISON PARK VET. HOSP./BROADMOOR CAT CLINIC 4016 E. MADISON M–F 8AM–5:30 PM (1–2PM CLOSED FOR LUNCH) SAT 9AM–12PM	(206)324-4050 SEATTLE (Madison Park)
NORTHEAST VETERINARY HOSPITAL 9505 35TH NE M–F 9AM–9PM (LIMITED STAFF 6–9PM) SAT 9AM–3PM	(206)523-1900 SEATTLE (Maple Leaf)
PET CARE CENTER VETERINARY HOSPITAL 2950 SW AVALON WAY M–F 8AM–5:30PM, SAT 8AM–4:30PM, SUN 10AM–12PM	(206)935-3600 WEST SEATTLE
POULSBO MARINA VETERINARY CLINIC 19570 10TH AVENUE M,W, F 9AM–6PM, THURS & SAT 9AM–12PM	(360)779-4166 POULSBO
RAINIER VETERINARY HOSPITAL 815 RAINIER AVENUE S M–F 8AM–5PM, SAT 9AM–2PM	(206)324-4144 SEATTLE (South Seattle)
SPRING GLEN VETERINARY HOSPITAL 17604 110th AVENUE SE M–F 7AM–7PM, SAT 10AM–2PM	(425)228-1002 RENTON
SUNSET PET HOSPITAL 3241 NE SUNSET BLVD. M–F 8AM–5:30PM, SAT 8AM–2PM	(425)226-6359 RENTON
WEST SEATTLE VETERINARY HOSPITAL 5261 CALIFORNIA AVENUE SW M–F 7AM–7PM, SAT 8AM–5PM	(206)923-3551 WEST SEATTLE



Emergency Veterinarians

You can call them late at night to ask questions or visit for emergencies only

NORTHEAST VETERINARY HOSPITAL

(206)523-1900

9505 35TH NE

SEATTLE (Maple Leaf)

M-F 9AM-9PM (LIMITED STAFF 6-9PM) SAT 9AM-3PM

DR. ON CALL UNTIL 11 P.M. 24HR. EMERGENCY SERVICE

*EMERALD CITY EMERGENCY CLINIC

(206)634-9000

4102 STONEWAY N

SEATTLE (Fremont)

M-F 6PM-8AM, WEEKENDS NOON SAT-8AM MON, HOLIDAYS 24HRS.

*DO NOT WANT TO SEE CATS WITH Upper Respiratory Infection, INJURIES ONLY!



FOSTER CARE GUIDELINES FOR CATS



PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR YOUR FOSTER CAT

Cats/Kittens

When fostering cats or kittens with a cold, the shelter recommends they be separated from foster parents' own cats until they have no lingering symptoms. Foster cats or kittens can be kept in a separate room, like a laundry room or bathroom or walk-in closet. Introducing a cat into a new home is extremely stressful for most cats—a cat's typical reaction is to run and hide. You can help ease the cat's stress by setting up a safe haven for the cat before he/she arrives.

What you will need:

- **litterbox:** Cats will instinctively use a litterbox. A deep litterbox is less messy with cats that really like to dig. An uncovered litterbox is more readily used by all cats than a covered one.
- **litter:** Do not use clumping litter with kittens under 6 mos. It can cause serious health problems if eaten, which most kittens do! A kitten may even die if the clumping litter forms a blockage in the intestines. It can also cause blockages in the respiratory systems of very young kittens that breathe in the fine grains of litter. Inexpensive clay litter provides a gratifying digging sensation and is widely accepted by most cats and kittens. There are also several natural products on the market, such as recycled newspaper, pine pellets, etc.
- **cardboard box or crate:** You can check a crate out at the shelter. It will provide a familiar smelling, dark, quiet home.
- **food:** **The food you feed your foster cat is important because the saying, “You are what you eat,” applies as well to cats as to humans. It especially applies to cats whose immune systems have been compromised.**

CAT FOODS that the shelter recommends:

Dry—IAMS Kitten and Science Diet Growth; Canned—IAMS chicken, turkey or lamb canned cat food, Science Diet Growth; Other—cooked white rice with chicken or turkey baby food, supplemented with milk-free lacto-bacillus powder (available in health food stores)

Kittens need a mix of dry and canned food specifically formulated for kittens. They should be gradually weaned onto dry food. You can purchase these foods at any good pet supply store. Pet supply stores tend to sell foods that are more nutritious than grocery store brands.

Do not feed your foster cat/kitten cow's milk. It is difficult to digest and causes diarrhea.

- **water:** Food and water should be placed far apart from the litterbox.
- **heating pad or hot water bottle:** (usually only used with small kittens) Always place heating pads on the lowest setting. Make sure that your cat/kitten cannot get tangled in or chew on any electrical cords.
- **toys:** Mice, ping pong balls, empty rolls of toilet paper, paper bags are all good toys. Give catnip to adult cats, but not to kittens. All toys should be disinfected before giving them to another foster cat or kitten. Do not let cats/kittens play with string unsupervised.
- **scratching post:** the corrugated cardboard type is very inexpensive.
- **bed:** This can be the cat carrier or simply a cardboard box lined with a soft blanket or towel.
- **two food bowls:** You may want to provide two food bowls...one for eat-at-will dry cat food, the other for canned food. Some cats have allergies to plastic so try to avoid plastic dishes.
- **water bowl:** Provide access to water at all times. Hydration is VERY important to sick cats. Young animals can drown, so make sure your water dish is shallow.
- **scale:** A scale is optional but useful in monitoring small kittens' growth, which averages 4 ounces a week.
- **Odor neutralizer** (available at any pet store): Nature's Miracle or Simple Solution is recommended to clean and neutralize odors from “accidents.”



INTRODUCING A CAT TO A NEW HOME (Cat Behavior Dept., SFSPCA)

Open up your cat carrier and let the cat decide whether he/she wants to explore or to remain inside the carrier. Many times a cat will remain inside the carrier for hours.

Give the cats time to adjust to their new territory. Come back to the room to visit often, but let cats set the pace of the visits. Don't force your attention on the cats—when they want attention, they will ask for it. When the cats are more comfortable in the room (it may take a day, a week, or more) open the door and let them explore the rest of the house at their own pace. Cats usually begin investigating at night, making short explorations interspersed with rapid retreats to their safe haven. It is rare for a cat to explore a new territory without hesitation.

If the cats are allowed to adapt to a new environment at their own speed, everything will work out in good time. The length of time needed to establish new territory will depend on temperament, past experiences and whether there are other cats or dogs already present in the new home. If no other cats or dogs are present in the household, the adjustment period usually takes one to two weeks, but it can take several months.

Multi-Cat Household

Before introducing your foster cat/kitten to your own cat or kitten, consult with your foster care coordinator. If your foster cat has Upper Respiratory Infection, the shelter recommends that you separate your foster cat from your own cat until it is no longer contagious.

When new cats are being introduced into a new home where there is already a resident cat or cats, it is especially important to give the cats a safe haven. Provide new cats with their own room in which to adjust, as previously described, before introducing them to the resident cat. This allows both the newcomers and the resident cat time to get used to one another's scents before their first face-to-face interaction.

The best way to let cats meet, is to crack the door to the bedroom a few inches and let them sniff each other through this space. Observe the cats while doing this for about a half hour. If one or both of the cats give a very intense hiss or growl, or try to swat at each other, close the door and repeat this process until the visits become calm. A little hissing and batting at each other is usually expected. In the meantime, you can help the cats become used to each other by playing with interactive toys while the door is cracked, feeding the cats treats on either side of the door, and switching the cats' bedding so they can get used to each other's scent.

If the sniff visits are going well, it's time to start supervised interactions. Open the door and let the new cats come out and explore. Let the cats come out of its room at their own pace. Forcing the cats to come into a new territory will just make the cat more tense and prolong their insecurity. Let the cats enter each others' territory for about a half hour. Then separate the cats and repeat this process a few times each day. If a cat seems overly stressed about the other cat, you can distract the cat with toys or food treats, then immediately separate the cats at the end of the play or treat session. This time apart allows them to be able to process the information they gained while they were together. It also allows them both to regain their sense of territory and confidence, which encourages a favorable interaction at their next meeting. Continue this process daily, lengthening the amount of time they are together a little each session. Do not allow your foster cat and your resident cat(s) to spend time together when you are not home until you are absolutely positive they will get along.

Never punish a cat for aggressive behavior towards another cat. Most owners do this thinking they will teach the cat that the aggressive behavior is inappropriate, but only end up making the cat more stressed and upset, prolonging the cat to cat aggression. The best way to react is either to stay silent and calmly separate the cats, or to speak softly to the cats.

The key to introducing cats to each other is patience. What we most often perceive as fighting is actually their way of working out their territory. This is an essential part of how cats learn to live together in a multi-cat household, and they must go through it. Our intervention prolongs this process. So for the most part, let them do what they will and stay out of it. Your anxiety about their interactions can feed their agitation, so try to be calm and encouraging, letting them know that they are acting appropriately.



The only times your intervention may be necessary is if their exchanges with each other draw blood or if one is continually chasing/dominating the other one. The best way to intervene is to squirt them with a spray bottle containing water. Ideally you should just squirt the one who is instigating the aggression (and again only if the cat is drawing blood or is constantly chasing the other cat, not for hissing or batting at the other cat). If a spray bottle isn't handy, a loud noise, such as clapping hands also works well. **You never want to get in the middle of a cat fight.** Cats in the heat of battle can redirect their aggression toward you, and cat bites to humans can be serious. The average amount of time it takes for cats to establish the rules of territory with each other is two weeks to two months, although it can take longer.

Introducing a Cat to a Resident Dog

When introducing your dog to a new cat, you should make sure that your dog knows basic obedience. You will need to have your dog under control when interacting with a new cat so he can learn which behaviors are appropriate and which ones are not. It is generally easier to introduce a kitten to a dog, but it isn't necessary for a harmonious relationship. If you do bring home a kitten, follow the guidelines given below, but **do not leave them together unsupervised** until the kitten is at least four months old and able to defend himself if the need arises.

Introducing a new cat to a resident dog is similar to introducing cats to one another (as described in the Multi-Cat Household section). Without letting them actually meet, you will want to start by giving the new cat a safe haven. Set him up in his own room and allow him to become comfortable. Once he is comfortable in the room let him explore the rest of the house for short periods each day while the dog is not there.

Cats' personalities are directly related to how they perceive and experience their territory. A cat who is comfortable and self-assured in his territory will be more confident and relaxed with new, potentially stressful situations. When the cat appears fairly relaxed in most areas of the house, let them meet. The best way to do this is to introduce them while the cat is up on a high surface unreachable by the dog (such as a counter or cat furniture), then **bring the dog into the room on leash**. Observe their interactions. A dog that is showing overt aggression, such as snarling, growling, baring teeth, etc., will probably never accept a cat. The cat is better off kept separated for the entire foster period.

If all is reasonably calm so far, walk the dog around the room on leash. Let the dog go wherever he wants, but don't let go of the leash in case the dog decides to chase the cat. On-leash interactions give the cat the opportunity to approach the dog if he chooses, or to find his own route of escape. During the first few meetings the cat and dog will probably not interact face to face.

A dog is a predatory animal. It is a natural instinct for a dog to want to chase a cat. Assume that the dog will chase the cat—so that you are prepared. Do not ever let the dog intimidate the cat by barking or chasing. **Use a lead and collar and give a quick, sideways tug each time the dog acts inappropriately to let him know these behaviors are unacceptable.** On the other hand, if the cat bops the dog on the nose as a warning, that is a good sign and should not be discouraged. When they set up boundaries between themselves, they are beginning to establish a working relationship. Let them interact with the dog on leash for about one half hour, then return the cat back to his safe haven. Increase the amount of time they are together a little each visit.

It is important to be patient and encouraging in their interactions. If you are relaxed, they too will be more at ease. Always praise friendly behavior profusely. Don't try to rush the introduction or force them to interact more than either of them are willing. Pressing them to accept each other will only slow down the adjustment process. You should use your best judgment as to when they can begin supervised sessions with the dog off-leash.

1996 SF/SPCA, Written by Kristie Bradley

Update/rewritten by Laura Harris, Additions by SAS Foster Care Coordinators



MEDICAL CARE FOR CATS/KITTENS

Call your foster care coordinator if signs of lethargy, weakness, lack of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, congestion, watery eyes, hair loss, sneezing, and any visible parasites (fleas or worms) develop. A plan for treatment (whether in-house or with a vet visit) will then be established. If you have internet access, www.pets.com can also offer useful information and advice.

Vaccinations and Worming

All cats and kittens above 5 weeks of age in foster care have been found negative for feline leukemia. Foster parents will be given the animal's vaccination and worming records. Flea treatments are available if needed. The shelter may vaccinate 4–5-week-old, healthy kittens for upper respiratory and distemper diseases. With this vaccination, it is not uncommon for them to be a little depressed, run a slight fever, and be less active and eat less for 24 hours after the vaccine was given. If they appear sick longer than that period, they should be seen by a veterinarian.

Kittens should be routinely wormed for ascarids (roundworms), and fecals should be checked every week or ten days if possible. Coccidia should be suspected if chronic diarrhea is present after kittens have been wormed for ascarids, and a vet should be consulted.

Worming directions for Cats: 0.10 cc's of (Nemex=Strongid-T) wormer per pound. One time daily for 4 days. Repeat in 10 days.

Ear Mites

The ear mite, *Otodectes cyanotis*, is a common parasite for cats. Watch for violent scratching of the ears, often creating a sore behind an ear. If the cat starts to scratch especially when his ear is touched, then he probably has ear mites. Also watch for him to repeatedly shake his head. You usually cannot see ear mites without magnification. The cat will produce a dark brown, crumbly wax because of ear mites. A vet should be consulted to treat these mites or the mite eggs. Untreated ear mites can lead to self-trauma, ear infections and even hearing loss.

Ear mites are easily treated. Daily cleaning of the ear canals to remove the crusty buildup is crucial. A milicide lotion such as Mila-Clear is then applied as directed. The life cycle of a mite is 21 days, so treatment should continue for at least three weeks.

Clean the ear canals by using cotton-tip swabs moistened with an ear-cleaning solution, warm water, or mineral oil. Insert the swab straight down into the ear canal and swab upwards and outward to remove the debris in which the mites hide. Swab several times in and around the many folds and crevices of the ear canal to do a thorough job. The ear canal is L-shaped, so there is little risk of damaging the ear canal as long as you insert the swab straight down and swab upwards from the bottom. It will help to restrain the cat's head by grasping the ear flap between your index finger and thumb. A second person may help by gently holding the cat still. Scratching the ears during or after cleaning and other signs of discomfort are normal reactions of your cat to treatment and will subside in time as the ears clear up. If signs of ear mites are still present after a month of treatment, see a veterinarian for further advice.

Ear mites can spread to other cats, dogs, rabbits and ferrets by close contact and shared bedding. **There is little likelihood of passing ear mites to pets at home if you start treatment before introducing your foster cat to the others and if you continue treatment until the problem is eliminated.**

DIARRHEA

Diarrhea is caused by diet, stress, parasites, and panleukopenia (feline distemper). The most serious of these is panleukopenia (this illness tends to affect young cats), because it is highly contagious and always fatal. For this reason, all kittens with diarrhea require immediate attention—usually starting with a stool sample and/or vet exam. Diarrhea can cause dehydration. To check for dehydration, pull up the skin above the shoulder blades. If it snaps back quickly, the cat is not dehydrated. If it goes back slowly, the cat is dehydrated and needs fluids. Call your foster care coordinator immediately.

Panleukopenia

This rare but deadly illness is caused by a hardy virus that attacks the lining of the intestine and is transmittable only among cats. Incubation is 2–8 days, and kittens and unvaccinated adults are most susceptible. Symptoms include lethargy, weakness, lack of appetite, vomiting and then diarrhea. One or more symptoms may be present at a time,



and the course can be so acute that sudden death is the first symptom. Treatment usually fails. The virus from sick cats/kittens is present in all body fluids, especially feces and vomitus. It is highly contagious. You will need to disinfect your home by doing the following:

Double bag and dispose of all bedding, litter, toys, plastic food dishes, boxes, etc.

Steel, aluminum, or ceramic bowls and all surfaces must be disinfected carefully with a mixture of 1 ounce of bleach with 1 quart water. Spray all surfaces with this solution. (This solution generally does not damage carpet, upholstery, and clothing.)

If not disinfected, this virus can persist for up to one year as it resists freezing and drying.

Repeat all areas of disinfection for 3 days consecutively.

Your own cats should be safe if current on vaccinations and kept separate from fosters. Consult with your vet and watch for symptoms. Future fostering may have to be postponed after a case of panleukopenia. Your foster care coordinator will advise.

Parasites

The most common parasites found in cats are coccidia and giardia, roundworms, tapeworms, and hookworm. Tapeworms will look like pieces of rice. Round and hookworms may be vomited. A fecal exam will determine which parasite to treat. Kaopectate and/or appropriate medications (Albon, Strongid-T, or Droncit) will be prescribed for coccidia and worms. Antibiotics will be prescribed for giardia.

Diet

Diarrhea caused by diet can be caused by improper dilution or poor quality of kitten formula or by cow's milk. Do not feed your foster cats/kittens cow's milk because they do not tolerate lactose sugars in milk. Be sure to mix any kitten formula properly. Generic and some name brand dry foods and some of the very rich canned foods can cause diarrhea. Consider the foods recommended in the PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR YOUR FOSTER CAT section.

Ringworm

This is not a life threatening disease in an otherwise healthy kitten, but because it can spread to humans, kittens in shelters are often euthanized due to this fungal infection. These kittens need to be isolated (ideally in a room without a rug so the room can be thoroughly cleaned to get rid of spores which will spread the infection.) The shelter has had success with bathing the kittens in Nolvasan solution (1 part Nolvasan to 9 parts water) and giving the antifungal drug Fulvicin. Nolvasan will also decrease the itch. These kittens need to be fostered until the fungus is shed from their skin, which takes 3–6 weeks. They can lose all their fur or just patches of it. At certain stages of development, some strains of ringworm will fluoresce bright green under a black light, but the best way to diagnose for sure is by doing a fungal culture. Ringworm is contagious to humans. Consult your doctor for proper preventative hygiene.

Fleas

If your foster cat/kitten has a fleas, call your foster care coordinator for an appropriate treatment. Kittens younger than four months of age **MUST NOT** BE flea-dipped, powdered, or collared. Kittens over eight weeks of age can be treated with Advantage, if flea-combing is not solving the problem. Before you begin flea-combing, fill a bowl of water with a few drops of dish soap. Put fleas you find in the water and they will drown. (The dish soap prevents the fleas from swimming to the edge of the bowl and jumping out. All cats and kittens should be groomed daily. Use a soft bristle brush or a soft slicker brush.

Fleas can transmit tapeworms, cause anemia (**which can lead to death in small or debilitated animals**), weaken an ill animal, and/or infest your own home and animals. Fleas usually are found on animals who are ill and so, as with any illness, you will want to strengthen the overall health of the animal. As a rule, healthy animals are less likely to get fleas than sick ones. Good food, minimal stress, proper hygiene and TLC will most likely keep an animal from getting fleas. To check for fleas, inspect your cat daily as part of a socializing routine—inspecting the rear groin, belly, tail, head, under chin and head and neck (common places for fleas). Look also for black specks of flea dirt, which is actually digested blood. If fleas are present, treat as soon as possible. Change bedding and vacuum the floors daily. The washing machine will remove fleas/eggs/dirt. If needed, treat your foster cat's quarters with a flea-killing agent containing boron compounds, which are very safe.



FELINE UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTION (URI)

URI is similar to a human cold. (Humans cannot catch it from cats.) Three micro-organisms are more often implicated, two are viruses and one is a bacteria-like entity. They are transmitted and harbored in the nose, mouth, and eyes and cause irritations to these moist surfaces. The irritations lead to characteristic signs of sneezing and discharge from the eyes and nose. The shelter recommends separating foster cats with URI from healthy cats until they have no lingering symptoms.

In general, URI symptoms consist of just sneezing with some discharge from the eyes and nose. Occasionally, the cat's condition may progress to heavy discharge, fever, and lack of appetite. In rare circumstances the cat may also develop ulcerations of the mouth, nose, and eyes. The symptoms of URI may last a few days to several weeks. Some cats which have recovered from URI become carriers. They get recurrences, usually mild, especially when under stress.

As in humans, stress is a major factor in the body's ability to fight infection. Any time a cat is transferred to a facility outside your home (groomer, veterinary office, boarding facility, breeding facility, cat shows and shelters), there will be a risk of contracting URI. The chance of developing URI increases because of the increased concentration of animals and the stress of being transferred to a new environment. Other stresses, such as loss or gain of a companion, change in diet, recent surgery, treatment for parasites and vaccination, can increase the risk of contracting URI.

Treatment

In addition to sneezing, runny nose and eyes, the cat may become a bit lethargic and have a decreased appetite. Complete lack of appetite and fever can lead to dehydration, which requires veterinary attention. As with colds in humans, the infection is usually mild, and often no treatment is necessary. Keep the nose and eyes clear of discharge by wiping with a warm, wet cloth. Humid air from a vaporizer or hot shower helps clear congested passages. Keeping your foster cat eating and drinking water is important. Coax him/her to eat with highly palatable foods such as fish-flavored canned cat food, Hills brand "A-D" cat food, human baby food (turkey or chicken), tuna in water (as a last resort—this can cause diarrhea), or even chicken broth. Spend time each day gently petting your foster cat to make him/her more comfortable. Watch for signs of dehydration. If your foster cat appears dehydrated, or if discharge is very thick and yellow-green colored, then antibiotics may need to be prescribed by a veterinarian to prevent or treat a secondary bacterial infection. Eye medication and nose drops may also be prescribed to control the local infection to these areas. On rare occasions, a cat may have to be hospitalized for fluids, force feedings, and injections to manage fever, dehydration, and lack of appetite.

Contagious to other cats

The risk of a healthy, vaccinated cat contracting URI is minimal if the healthy cat has been separated from the infected cat for 7–10 days. Contact your vet to find out more about your healthy cat's vaccination record before fostering a cat with URI.

SPECIAL CASES

Taming Feral Kittens Alley Cat Allies

Feral kittens are the offspring of feral female cats or of lost or abandoned domestic cats. Feral colonies usually originate when lost or abandoned unaltered domestic cats congregate near a food source, such as a garbage dumpster. Females will find a safe place to give birth and old instincts inherited from her wild cousin, the African Wild Cat will reappear. She will teach her offspring to be wary and mistrustful of humans, to hide and defend themselves against adversaries. They will spit and hiss if approached by humans, and though small, will bite and scratch if not handled with respect for their wild natures.

When fostering a feral kitten, you should have a pre-exposure rabies vaccination and take care to keep your tetanus shot current.

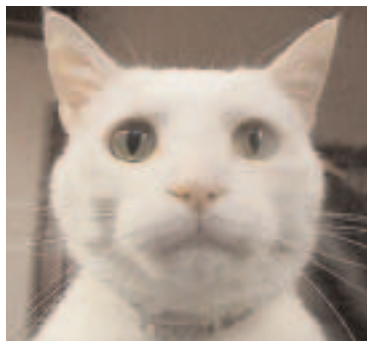
Feral kittens will become affectionate and loving companions. They need to be placed in adoptive homes as early as possible, because they tend to bond with one person. Be aware that young feral cats who may be completely tame and loving with one person, can revert to their wild state when placed in another home. It can sometimes take six months, a year or longer for the cats to bond again.



The process of taming kittens can take from two to six weeks depending on their age and degree of wildness. First and foremost, any person attempting this process should be totally committed and patient. Do not take on too many kittens at one time. Be cautious when you work with ferals—remember they are wild and will defend themselves if cornered. Never handle a new or strange feral kitten until you know how they will react to you, and always wear long sleeves and keep gloves handy. If one escapes from a container, do not grab it with bare hands. If you get bitten, clean the wound immediately and seek medical attention. Scratches are usually less likely to become infected but need to be cleaned carefully as well. If you cannot catch an escaped kitten, withhold food and set a trap to make it hungry enough to enter the trap.

The steps involved in taming a feral kitten:

1. Containment in a cage
2. Periodic and brief handling with protective towel
3. Containment in a small room
4. Exposure to other humans
5. Placement in a suitable adoptive home



Containment in a cage

Begin in a cage in a small room and for the first two days do not attempt handling. They must learn to feel safe. Visit them frequently and talk to them, but resist touching. Always move slowly. Leave a radio playing soft music on in the room with them. Allow them to get used to human voices by leaving the television set on.

Periodic Handling

After two days select the least aggressive kitten. Place a towel over it and pick it up in the towel. If the kitten stays calm, pet it gently on the head from behind. Never approach from the front. Hands frighten the kitten, and it will bite when approached from the front.

If the kitten remains calm, grip it securely by the nape of the neck, put the towel on your lap and set the kitten on the towel. Stroke the kitten's body while speaking in soft, reassuring tones, then release. Make this first physical contact brief. Go through this process with all the kittens, and give them a special, tasty treat after all have been handled. Repeat this process as frequently as possible.

Containment in small room

Within a week the kittens should have made considerable progress, although each kitten will develop at a different rate. They should have access to one room and be placed in the cage only if necessary. If there is one that is not becoming tame, place it in a separate cage in another room, away from the others. This will allow you to work with the kitten more frequently and will increase its dependence on a human. It will also prevent perpetuation of wildness in littermates. In some litters, each member must be isolated in order to not reinforce wildness in the group.

Exposure to other humans

If the feral kitten can be around another calm, friendly cat, it will help the taming process. Kittens are copy-cats and will follow the tame cat's behavior, coming over to be petted if they hear the tamer cat purring while petted. Give frequent treats by hand, and teach them to play with cat toys, such as the Cat Dancer. Interaction with humans during play can hasten the taming process. If you have to medicate, use liquid medicine in moist food, or crush tablets into baby food (the meaty variety). Forcing tablets down a feral cat or kitten causes severe trauma and can undo the training process.

When the kittens no longer respond by biting, encourage friends to handle them as often as possible. Socialization with other humans is very important. Feral cats tend to bond with one human, so they adjust to a new home better if they have also socialized with other humans.

Placement in an adoptive home

Some people are afraid to tell adopters that kittens are feral, for fear they will not be placed. Alley Cat Allies and the shelter recommend that people should be told. The kittens may always retain some feral instincts, however latent



they may be. Kittens do best if there are no small children in the home. The most suitable home is a calm environment so the kittens feel safe and secure. Ideally, two kittens should be placed together in a home and preferably in a home where an adult is home during the day.

The taming process will be worthwhile. Many tamed ferals will be a bit elusive and others will demand human attention constantly. Pass on this fact sheet to anyone who adopts your feral kittens. They should go through similar procedures, since a new home can be confusing and traumatic. Most soon settle down happily and enjoy the luxuries and love offered!

Injuries

Foster cats/kittens who have fractures, casts, or have had surgery require very specific medical care that will be passed on by the cat/kitten's vet. Medications will be supplied. Generally these cats need to be confined to a crate or a small room to limit mobility. Bedding, food, water, and a litterbox should be easily accessible. Feeding should be routine and consistent, and vet directions should be followed. Keep the cat's area clean and free of feces and urine. Some injured cats will have bandages or incisions or open wounds needing care, and keeping them clean is critical.

As with all fosters, watch for signs of illness, because injured cats are under stress and will be prone to illness. Be aware of bandages becoming wet or smelly, stitches being pulled, draining from an incision, poor appetite, etc., and call your vet to ask for advice.

Human contact is crucial for recovering animals. Active play should be limited, but cuddling, petting, talking, brushing, lap time, and massaging are all good social activities for a recovering animal.

HOW TO TAKE A CAT'S TEMPERATURE

You will need:

Rectal Thermometer

Vaseline

Disinfectant (30:1 water and bleach solution is recommended)

- Sterilize the thermometer by dipping it into the solution
- Dry with a clean paper towel
- Shake the thermometer down to under 80 degrees
- Coat the tip of the thermometer with a small amount of vaseline
- Insert the tip 1/4" into the cat/kittens rectum and hold there for 1–2 minutes
- Be gentle since rectal tissues are fragile and you don't want to tear the tissue
- You may need a second person to help hold the cat to prevent struggling. You should be speaking softly to the cat, and if a second person is helping, sometimes it is helpful to stroke the cat around the head to distract her from what is going on
- Be sure to sterilize the thermometer again when you are finished

A normal temperature for cats and kittens is 101.5–102.5 degrees. Any temperature below 100 degrees or above 103 degrees is a sign of illness. Call your foster care coordinator for assistance. If the cat has a temperature below 100 degrees, get it onto a heating pad immediately. Set the heating pad to LOW and cover it with a towel. If the temperature is above 103 degrees and the cat has been on a heating pad, remove the heating pad immediately.

HOW TO GIVE A CAT A PILL (Humane Society of the U. S., 1996)

If you are not in control, cats will sense this and do their best to make the entire process as difficult as they can. Remain "calm, cool, and collected." Cats are not fond of having their mouths pried open and pills dropped down them. They'll do their best to back away from you and flee. So a key part of the process is making sure cats are properly restrained. Some cats learn to associate getting a pill with salivating. To prevent messy drooling, you'll have to learn to pill the cat quickly and effectively.



1. If you are pilling the cat by yourself, hold the cat so that he can't back away. A corner works well in case he races away from you and cradle him gently between your knees so that you have both hands free. If the cat is especially hard to restrain try wrapping him up. Simply place the cat in a pillowcase or towel and wrap it completely around the cat's body covering all four paws. If someone is available to help you have your helper comfort and cradle the cat from behind, holding the cat's front legs down securely so that he doesn't scratch.
2. Place one hand over the cat's head so that your thumb and forefinger are on the side ridges of his face just behind the jaw.
3. Tilt the cat's head back until his nose points upward. The cat should reflexively open his mouth slightly.
4. Hold the pill between the thumb and forefinger of your other hand and use your middle finger to gently open the cat's mouth fully.
5. Drop the pill as far back into the cat's throat as possible, aiming for the point where the tongue meets the roof of his mouth. If you are comfortable sticking your finger into the cat's mouth, use your finger to slide the pill down.
6. Quickly close the cat's mouth continuing to hold his head back. Stroke the cat's throat to stimulate swallowing. When the cat licks his nose, it often means he has swallowed the pill. If the cat doesn't swallow, try blowing lightly on his nose. This stimulates the cat's swallowing reflex and serves to distract him.
7. Praise the cat after he has swallowed the pill. Give him a treat. Make the pill-taking experience a positive one and he'll be more cooperative the next time he has to take a pill, which will probably be the next day.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED FOR BOTTLE BABIES

Box/Carrier

Towels

Small towel scraps or washcloths

KMR (a milk replacer)

A/D or baby food

Bottles and nipples

Small syringes

Dishes with low sides (pie tins)

Hot water bottle or Heating pad

Timer/ticking clock

Flea comb

Baby shampoo

Kaopectate

Litterbox with low sides (a pie tin, plant water catcher, or box)

Clay litter

Kitchen scale that measures in 1 oz. increments

Paper and pen to track daily weight and food intake



FOSTER KITTENS: FEEDING BOTTLE BABIES by Karen Stone

1. Make sure the nipple is big enough! Cut the tip—don't just pierce it with a needle. Milk should drip out when the bottle is held upside down. Otherwise, if the hole in the nipple is too small, kittens will exhaust themselves sucking, not get enough milk, and can starve to death even though they appear to be nursing.

2. Use KMR which stands for “Kitten Milk Replacer.” This is the preferred formula for kittens. It can be purchased at vet hospitals as well as pet food stores. It’s cheaper to buy the powder and add water rather than buying the milk in a can. Make sure milk is warm (test it on your wrist). Kittens don’t like cold milk; they may refuse to nurse and won’t digest it well. Avoid the milk replacer called “Just Born”. It is a soy based product and frequently causes diarrhea.
3. Hold kittens to bottle feed in the same position they would be in if they were nursing on mom: their feet should be on the floor or on your lap. **Do NOT hold them on their backs like a human baby**—they can aspirate milk, choke, and get pneumonia. As kittens get older, they will stand up on their hind legs and stretch up with their front paws to get to the bottle—that’s ok and normal.
4. If kittens are very hungry, they will act frantic. They will grab the nipple with their teeth and shake it or paw wildly at the nipple. Pull the nipple out of their mouth, give them a second or two to calm down, and try again. If they nurse too fast, milk will come out their nose. Slow them down by using a nipple with a smaller hole or don’t tilt the bottle up as high. However, always tilt the bottle enough so the kitten is sucking milk and not air (You should see bubbles in the milk as they nurse).
5. The GI tract (stomach and intestines) of kittens is very sensitive, and they are prone to getting sick with bacterial infections in their gut. Try to keep everything as clean as possible—only pour a small amount of milk into the bottle for the kittens to nurse on, and when they have finished, pour any leftover milk into a clean bottle and refrigerate it. Then clean out the dirty bottle with a bottle brush, dish detergent and very hot water and rinse the nipple thoroughly.
6. I bottle feed every 2–3 hours during the day and also at night until kittens are about 2 weeks old. Then I feed every 3–4 hours during the day and feed once during the night until kittens are 4 weeks old. If kittens are sleeping, wake them up if necessary to feed them! Normally they would nurse a little on mom, fall asleep, nurse a little more, fall asleep, etc. Hungry babies can fall back asleep if there is no mom to nurse on and appear not to be hungry when in fact their blood sugar is dropping and they are starving. Their bellies will be rounded and appear full after they have eaten and will feel slack when they are empty. The books will tell you not to let kittens nurse too much at one time and not to let their bellies get too full. What I have found from experience (I have fostered about 100 kittens) is that if you don’t let them nurse until they are satisfied, you will have crying, whining kittens. Occasionally a kitten will want to nurse until you are sure it is about to burst—so in that case I intervene and pull the nipple away. But usually they stop on their own when they are full.
7. Stimulate kittens to urinate and defecate immediately after feeding. To do this, use a piece of gauze or a cotton ball, dip it in warm water and ring it out. Rub gently on the lower abdomen (just in front of the anal-genital area) until kitten urinates. They will not have a bowel movement every time—sometimes they don’t have one for several days. Don’t worry as long as they are still nursing. They seem to go through a period where their little bodies are absorbing just about everything they eat in order to grow and there’s not much left over to excrete out. You will need to stimulate them after every feeding until the kittens are about 3 weeks old or else they will bloat and die. At about 3 weeks of age, their GI and urinary tracts are mature enough to know they have to empty without stimulation from you. (Mom cat naturally stimulates her kittens as part of the cleaning process after her babies nurse—she licks them all over and eats any urine or feces that are excreted. This keeps the nest clean so the scent of the kittens will not be detected by predators.) I stimulate kittens over the bathroom sink until they are about 3 weeks old, then I stimulate them in a litterbox so they start to get the idea that this is the potty area. I leave a small amount of urine and feces in the litterbox to attract them to that area.
8. Keep the nest clean. Replace any towels that have urine or feces on them as soon as you discover kittens have soiled them. Otherwise, their carrier or box will smell bad very quickly, and kittens can develop infections from bacteria.
9. Make sure to clean the kittens after every feeding. Mom would do this and you are simulating being a mom cat. Use a piece of gauze or a cotton ball, dip it in warm water and wring it out, then clean the face (especially under the chin where milk dribbles), head, and rest of the body. This doesn’t take very long, but it is important for the kittens’ sense of well being. I usually stimulate kittens to urinate and defecate at the end of the cleaning process so everything done with the damp gauze gets done at once. If the mouth area is not kept very clean, bacteria will start to grow and the kitten will lose fur under the chin and even on the chest. This can happen after just 1 or 2 days of not cleaning, so it’s best to avoid this situation.
10. Keep kittens warm because they cannot regulate their own body temperatures until they are about 2 weeks old and if their body temperature drops they will die. You can use a heating pad set on LOW (That is the only setting



that should ever be used) but I prefer to use a hot water bottle wrapped in a towel. I put a stuffed animal in the carrier with the hot water bottle and blankets, and the kittens like to sleep next to the bottle or on top of it. I change the bottle every time it starts cooling off. I keep a hot water bottle in the carrier until the kittens are about 5–6 weeks old because if they don't have a mom they really enjoy snuggling up to the warmth.

Weaning:

1. Don't rush it. Some kittens want to start weaning at about 4 weeks and others don't really get into it until they are 5 or more weeks old.
2. Use canned food mixed with KMR. Warm it. Put a little food into the kitten's mouth. They usually like to eat off your fingers or the floor first—then they move to eating out of a dish. It is not uncommon for them to chew at the rim of the dish first instead of eating the food. Some kittens prefer to just have canned food without the KMR in it. Experiment with the tastes of your kittens—they are all different! I recommend a product like Precise as an excellent canned kitten food that most kittens seem to like (found at better quality pet food stores). I don't offer kibble (dry food) until kittens are at least 5 weeks old. Make sure to use kitten chow because it is smaller than kibble made for adults. I watch the kittens at first so they don't choke. It's a good idea to soak the kibble first in some warm water to soften it.
3. As kittens start to wean, everything is a potential food source, including litter. So it is normal to see them eating litter in their litterbox! When I see this, I take them over to their food dish and, if they are old enough, offer some dry food in case they are having the urge to start chewing. Don't use clumping litter with kittens less than 6 months old. If they eat it, it can clump and cause a blockage in their stomach or intestines. Very small kittens can get blockages in their respiratory system from breathing in fine grains of litter that clump in their nasal passages.

Fostering a Mom Cat and Kittens:

1. Mom cats are usually willing to foster other kittens besides their own. However, mom will not be able to provide enough milk for everybody. So supplemental feeding will be necessary, especially for the smallest babies. Also, make sure that all of mom's mammary glands are functional or you will definitely have to supplemental feed the babies with KMR. Some mom cats enjoy KMR added to their canned food.
2. Loss of maternal instinct (not caring for or feeding the kittens) when kittens are under 3 weeks old is serious and is an emergency. Mom is probably sick due to an infection (from retained placenta or fetus, bacteria, upper respiratory infection, virus) or eclampsia (decreased levels of calcium in her blood which can lead to staggering, seizures, and death). Get mom to a vet right away. Take kittens also so she doesn't panic because they're not with her.
3. Feed mom as much as she will eat—you cannot overfeed her when she is nursing. Offer canned and dry food and lots of fresh water daily. She can eat kitten food too—it's more concentrated in fat and protein than normal adult cat food. Nursing is a huge stress on her body, and she needs lots of calories.
4. Scoop poop from the litterbox several times a day to keep the room smelling fresh. Change the litter often and wash out the box to get rid of the ammonia smell from urine.
5. Mom comes back into heat when kittens are about 5 weeks old. Some females really howl and appear agitated when they are in heat. You can artificially stimulate her with a lubricated Q-tip inserted (about 1/4 inch) several times into her vulva to mimic breeding. Cats are stimulatory ovulatory which means they ovulate only after they are bred. If you can trick her body into thinking she's been bred (by using the Q-tip), you can get her to go out of heat, and she will stay out of heat for several weeks, during which time the kittens can be weaned and she can be spayed.

Sick Kittens:

1. Dehydration kills quickly. (What dehydration feels like to humans: headache, eyes ache, nausea, body aches, etc.) When animals are dehydrated, they don't eat or drink because they feel too sick—as a result, they get more dehydrated. At 12–15% dehydrated, an animal dies. Being able to give fluids, such as Lactated Ringers Solution, subcutaneously (under the skin) can save an animal's life. Every foster parent should know how to do this.



2. If you are adding B vitamins to subcutaneous fluids to stimulate appetite, use B-12 (red color), not B-complex (yellow color). B-complex stings when injected.
3. If mucous membranes (gums) are pale, supplement the kittens' diet with lixotenic (a liquid iron supplement).
4. Upper Respiratory Infections (URI) are very common in kittens and are normal in shelters where lots of stressed animals are housed together. Liquid Amoxicillin or Clavamox are commonly given as well as antibacterial/antiinflammatory medications for the eyes. Sometimes nose drops are also used (antiinflammatory medications for use in the ear can also be used in the nose to decrease the swelling of nasal passages.) It's important to keep the nose clean and decrease congestion, because if a sick animal can't smell, she won't eat.
5. If a kitten stops eating but doesn't have a URI, there is a possibility that she may have a bacterial infection in her gut (in spite of your best efforts to keep bottles clean and milk refrigerated). Getting the kitten started on Clavamox immediately can turn her around quickly and get her started eating again.
6. Calicivirus is one of the URI's that you can vaccinate for. If unvaccinated kittens become sick with this virus, they can have two different kinds of symptoms. One symptom is ulcers on the tongue that may be so painful they may keep the kitten from eating even if she wants to. The second symptom is a transitory arthritis which will cause the kitten to limp. I have had this virus go thru whole litters where they limp and drag themselves around for almost a week and then it goes away. It's very weird to see—the first time it happened to me, I thought a kitten had gotten stepped on until the rest of the kittens began acting the same way. No treatment is required except for supportive care (force feeding if necessary and subcutaneous fluids) because kittens that aren't feeling well for any reason often will stop eating.
7. Ringworm. This is not a life-threatening disease in an otherwise healthy kitten, but because it can spread to humans, kittens in shelters are often euthanized due to this fungal infection. To foster these kittens, you need to isolate them (ideally in a room without a rug so the room can be thoroughly cleaned to get rid of spores which will spread the infection). I have had success with bathing the kittens in Nolvasan solution (one part Nolvasan to 9 parts water) and giving the antifungal drug Fulvicin. Nolvasan will also decrease the itch. These kittens need to be fostered until the fungus is shed from their skin, which takes from 3–6 weeks. They can lose all their fur or just patches of it. At certain stages of development, some strains of ringworm will fluoresce bright green under a black light, but the best way to diagnose it for sure is by doing a fungal culture.

Vaccinations and Worming:

1. You can vaccinate for upper respiratory and distemper diseases at about 4–5 weeks old if the kittens are healthy. It's not uncommon for them to be a little depressed, run a slight fever, and be less active and eat less for 24 hours after a vaccine is given. If they appear sick longer than that time period, they should be seen by a veterinarian.
2. Kittens should be routinely wormed for ascarids (roundworms), and fecals should be checked every week or 10 days if possible. Coccidia should be suspected if chronic diarrhea is present after kittens have been wormed for ascarids.

Behaviors:

1. NEVER let kittens chew on your body parts (fingers, nose, eyelashes, hair, toes, feet, etc.) If you do, you are teaching your kitten to attack you. They learn incredibly quickly: after just one or two "play" sessions where you let kittens chew on you or bat at your face, they will catch on to your "game" and will try to attack you every time they are picked up. What I do to teach kittens that this is NOT ok is that I treat them like another kitten would. If one kitten pounces on a weaker kitten, the weaker kitten will let out a loud, sudden squeal. So I do the exact same thing if a kitten tries to pounce on me or bite me. I let out a loud squeal which, in kitten language, means "Stop it! You've gone too far! That hurts!!!" This is very effective in teaching the rougher kitten what the acceptable limits are for social interactions. While it may seem cute to have a one pound kitten nibbling on your nose or batting at your eyelashes, when a ten pound cat does this a year later, this animal is given away or euthanized. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of NEVER allowing kittens to attack you! This is also information that should be given to every person who adopts a cat or kitten.



2. Foster at least 2 kittens together if possible for socialization purposes and so they can teach each other through play and rough-housing how to limit their aggressiveness and inhibit their bite. I never interrupt play-fighting between kittens unless I have a kitten who is continually picking on a smaller kitten. Usually kittens take turns being the aggressor and being picked on, so they learn what it feels like to go too far and also what it feels like to be picked on.

3. Hissing and spitting are noises that kittens make when they are afraid. They may also swat out at you or another animal. This means “stay away.” If kittens are picked up suddenly, they may also hiss out of fear. So make sure they see you and get them used to being picked up off the floor when they are very small. Also, small kittens who are afraid and hungry will typically act wild—hissing and swatting and biting at everything. Every young kitten who is brought into a shelter should have wet food offered right away before any assessments are made. Low blood sugar will make a kitten act crazed.

4. The optimal time for socialization in kittens is from 2–7 weeks. So this is the time to get them used to other animals, kids, noises (vacuum, water running from a faucet), to being put in a carrier and taken for rides in the car, etc. They can still socialize up to 14 weeks, but it’s easier to do things earlier rather than later. Handle young kittens as much as possible and give them as wide a range of experiences as possible, while still keeping them safe. Young kittens tend to “boom and bust”—they run around and play for a while, then they all sack out and sleep.

Kitten Development				
AGE	MOTOR SKILLS	PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	EATING BEHAVIOR	SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
0–1 week Sucking reflex	Rooting reflex Poor thermal regulation Can’t retract claws	Rely on mother for heat to nurse (every 2–4 hours) Double birth weight Rely on mother to stimulate urination and defecation Can smell and vocalize	Mother stimulates kittens Rely on mother’s milk Colostrum important Nurse 25% time	Contact with mother and littermates Gentle brief human handling important Rely on mother to groom
1–2 weeks	Kneading while nursing Purring Start to support weight on front limbs, later on rear legs	Eyes open day 5–10 Ears open day 5–14 Aware of environment Triple birth weight Poor thermal regulation	Rely on mother’s milk If bottle feeding, provide a soft cloth for them to knead	Self play behaviors Bat, play bite Continued contact with mother and littermates
3 weeks	Begin to walk weak, stiff motions, unsteady Can retract claws	Senses maturing Quadruple birth weight Better thermal regulation Decrease urogenital reflex Eye color may change	Kittens begin to initiate Stay in contact constantly	May play with littermates May try to include mother in play
4 weeks	Developing motor skills Running Climbing	Start using litterbox (may need to put excreta in box to get idea) Urogenital reflex disappears	Kittens/mother both initiate nursing Begin to eat solid (can) food	Active play with littermates
5 weeks	Air-righting reflex (ask your coordinator) Climbing Depth perception		Can lap Eat solid food Mother avoids nursing advances	Stalk, chase, arch, sidestep, pounce behaviors Wood scratching Fear of humans; lots and varied handling important, will make more human-social cat Mother disciplines by bat on nose, growl
6–8 weeks	Increasing coordinated motor skills	Body taller, longer 1 1/2–2 lb. body weight	Less reliant on mother’s milk (would nurse up to 12 weeks) Eating solid, dry food	Human contact important may have been very limited in previous home



FOSTER CARE GUIDELINES FOR DOGS



DOGS/PUPPIES

When your foster dog or puppy first arrives to your home he/she will need to be kept in a single room, especially when you are at work or away from the house. So find a room where you can confine him/her. It would be ideal if it is a room where you spend a large part of your day, since dogs are pack animals and want to be with you. A kitchen or family room is perfect. Use a baby gate to block off the entrances to these rooms. By keeping the dog/puppy in one room, you are helping prevent “accidents” that may occur because of stress or adjust to your routine. You are also helping to housetrain the dog, and so you must be able to monitor his activities. The shelter recommends that you also use a crate in this room for times when you are away from the house. See the section on crate training.

DOG PROOFING HIS/HER ROOM

Walk into the room you are going to confine your foster dog to and look around. Ask yourself:

Do you have room for his crate?

Do you have quick access to the outside for bathroom emergencies?

Is there anything that can be chewed that you don't want chewed? Drapes? Couches? Rugs?

Are there exposed electrical wires?

Is there anywhere the dog can hide? Will you be able to get him/her out if he does hide?

Are there coffee tables with objects that can be knocked off by a wagging tail?

Are there plants in the room? If so, check the back of this manual to see that they are not toxic.

Once you have removed any hazards from his/her room, decide where you will set up the crate. Place the crate in a quiet, low traffic area of the room. Put a blanket in the crate, because this is where you will be teaching your foster dog/puppy to sleep. (Note: you may want to move the crate up to your bedroom at bedtime since they will be scared and it is very soothing and a great bonding experience to sleep together in your bedroom, AND, you probably will get a better night's sleep if your foster dog is feeling secure and not crying!) Decide where you will place his food and water bowls and set up your baby gates before you bring your foster dog home.

What you will need:

- food bowl
- food & water
- water bowl
- crate (you can check one out at the shelter)
- bedding (a clean, old blanket or towel or a dog bed that is washable)
- odor neutralizer (the only thing to clean housetraining mistakes with—if you clean mistakes with soap and water, your dog will smell his urine and go to the bathroom at that spot repeatedly)
- flea comb/brush
- toys (hard rubber balls, kong balls, fleece toys, rope toys, or nylabones. Do not give your foster dog hooves, rawhide, pigs ears, or vinyl toys that can cause diarrhea and can also choke your foster dog.)
- flat buckle collar with ID tag (stays on the dog at all times)
- leash
- training collar (or incorrectly referred to as the choke collar—when used improperly—should be kept on only during training periods)
- training treats (string cheese or small dog biscuits)
- baby gate(s)
- bitter apple (to spray on leashes, woodwork, drapery—anything you don't want chewed)



Food

The food you feed your foster dog is important because as the saying goes, “You are what you eat,” applies as well to dogs as to humans. It especially applies to dogs whose immune systems have been compromised. Dog foods that the shelter recommends: California Natural Chicken and Rice, Canidae, Innova, Natural Balance, Pinnacle. According to the *Whole Dog Journal*, what you should look for on a food label:

The label should be very specific: “chicken” is better than “poultry”; “chicken meal” is better than “chicken by-products,” which is better than “chicken digest,” which is better than “animal digest,” (which is the worst!)

- good sources of protein (whole meats or single-source meat meal, like “chicken meal” rather than “poultry meal”).
- a whole-meat source as one of the first two ingredients (chicken or chicken meal)
- whole, unprocessed grains, vegetables, and other foods (unprocessed food has a great chance of having its nutrients and enzymes intact).

Foods should not contain:

- meat by-products
- fats or proteins named generically (like animal fat, poultry fat, meat meal). It should instead read beef fat, chicken fat or lamb meal (more specific)
- food fragments (brewer’s rice, corn gluten, etc.)
- artificial preservatives (BHA, BHT or ethoxyquin)
- artificial colors
- sweeteners
- propylene glycol



Food Supplements

If your foster dog is needing extra nutrition (very thin, ill, or poor coat), we recommend a product like *The Missing Link*, which is a tasty powder that you sprinkle on food. It provides essential fatty acids and omega three oils.

Food Allergies

If your foster dog is experiencing hot spots (red patches of hairless skin), they might be due to food allergies. We recommend sticking to simple, easy-to-digest diets with chicken. If they are allergic to chicken, a diet of potatoes and duck or fish (*Innovative*, ask your vet about this food) will work miracles! Some dogs react to food allergies by getting raw sores on the pads of their feet, between their toes. Ask the shelter for some *Nolvasan Skin and Wound Cleanser*. This mild cleanser will clean and soothe raw spots and prevent infection. (This cleanser also works for any wounds.)

Feeding

Create a consistent schedule for feeding your foster dogs—whether you feed your foster dogs once a day or twice a day. Feed at the same time every day. Create a separate space for your foster dogs to eat. They will feel comfortable. If you have other dogs at home, **feed your foster dog in a separate room** and close the door—this will help prevent any arguments over food. Do not feed any “people” food. You do not know what his adoptive family will want to do, so don’t start a habit that they will have to break—by feeding only dog food, you are discouraging begging.



Amount of food (Feeding will depend on the age and size of your foster dog.)

Adult Dogs: dry adult dog food twice a day, once in the morning and once at night.

Nursing Mothers with Puppies: dry puppy food (extra calories), twice a day, and any supplemental vitamins directed by your foster care coordinator

Adolescent dogs (4 months–1 year): dry puppy food, twice a day

Weaned puppies (6–8 weeks–4 months): dry puppy food three to four times a day. Moisten the food with water or puppy formula

Unweaned puppies (4–8 weeks): canned food at 4 weeks. Introduce dry puppy food at 5 weeks and gradually change toward mostly dry food week by week. At 8 weeks, the puppies should eat straight dry kibble. Puppies of this age need to be fed four times a day.

Diet Change

Some animals react to a change in diet with diarrhea. If this happens, feed them cooked rice mixed with cottage cheese (two cups rice to one cup cottage cheese) for a day or two. Then reintroduce the dry kibble. Provide plenty of fresh water.

INTRODUCING THE FOSTER DOG TO YOUR OWN DOGS

Do NOT first introduce your foster dog to other dogs in your home. Have a friend (preferably not a family member, since dogs can be territorial of family members) take your foster dog on a leash and you take your dog on a leash and walk side by side on neutral territory. Let them sniff one another, while you hold the leash, so that you can get control of either dog quickly. Talk normally to your friend—letting the dogs know that you are fine, they are fine, and everything is fine! Walk around a couple of city blocks. When they have become friends, then you can go back home. Be aware that your home is considered by your family dogs as their “turf,” and that they are not always so eager to welcome strangers—especially strange dogs. So be alert and make the introductions gradually and calmly. You may want to leave leashes on the dogs so that you can get immediate control. Be sure to give your own dog LOTS of love and praise.

Do not over-stimulate your foster dog with introductions to many people or your neighbors’ dogs, and do not bring him into a busy pet store for a treat, and don’t take him to an off-leash area immediately. If your foster dog has excess energy and needs exercise, take him on a long, leashed walk or a run! Remember that your foster dog has perhaps been through a stressful surgery, abusive situation, or maybe just a lot of recent changes. Go slowly with your foster dog. Give him a chance to adjust and begin to build his confidence. Make your home a sanctuary for him so that he can begin healing.

INTRODUCING A DOG TO A CAT

When introducing your foster dog to a cat it is important that your dog knows basic obedience. (So wait a couple of days—until you’ve started some basic training and formed an understanding with your foster dog—to introduce him to your cat.) Let your dog settle down and get to know you and his surroundings first before you start introductions to small, furry creatures. Keep your cat in a special room. You will need to have your dog under control when interacting with a new cat so he can learn which behaviors are appropriate and which ones are not.

Introducing a cat to a dog is similar to introducing dogs to one another. Take your time and create a stress free environment. Without letting the cat and dog actually meet, you will want to start by keeping the cat separate. Set the dog up in his own room and allow him to become comfortable. Once he is comfortable in the room, let him explore the rest of the house for short periods each day while the cat is not there.

Then bring the cat into the room **and keep the dog on leash.** Observe their interactions. A dog that is showing overt aggression, such as snarling, growling baring teeth, etc., will probably never accept a cat. The cat and dog should be separated by baby gates or kept in separate rooms.



If all is reasonably calm so far, walk the dog around the room on leash. Let the dog go wherever he wants, but don't let go of the leash in case the dog decides to chase the cat. On-leash interactions give the cat the opportunity to approach the dog if he chooses, or to find his own route of escape. During the first few meetings the cat and dog will probably not interact face to face.

A dog is a predatory animal. It is a natural instinct for a dog to want to chase a cat. Assume that the dog will chase the cat—so that you are prepared. Do not ever let the dog intimidate the cat by barking or chasing. **Use a lead and collar and give a quick, sideways tug and say “Leave it!” each time the dog acts inappropriately to let him know these behaviors are unacceptable.** On the other hand, if the cat bops the dog on the nose as a warning, that is a good sign and should not be discouraged. When they set up boundaries between themselves, they are beginning to establish a working relationship. Let them interact with the dog on leash for about a one half hour, then return the cat back to his safe haven and bring the dog to his dog crate or bed. Give the dog a treat and lots of praise. Increase the amount of time they are together a little each visit.

It is important to be patient and encouraging in their interactions. If you are relaxed, they too will be more at ease. Always praise friendly behavior profusely. Don't try to rush the introduction or force them to interact more than either of them are willing. Pressing them to accept each other will only slow down the adjustment process. When the cat and dog seem to be getting used to each other, let the dog go, but keep his leash attached to his collar. Let him drag it around the house as he wanders. That way you can get control of him at any time. The cat will probably hide at first. You should use your best judgement as to when they can begin supervised sessions with the dog off-leash.

1996 SF/SPCA

Written by Kristie Bradley, Update/rewritten by Laura Harris, Additions by SAS staff

Expectations of behavior

Allow time for adjustment. It usually takes about 24 hours for a dog to settle in—sometimes it takes longer. Watch their behavior closely. On the average, foster parents have their dogs for three weeks before they are adopted. While this amount of time will not be long enough to fully train your foster dog, it will be enough time to give a good foundation to start on with his new family. You can begin training with some basic commands and crate training. Your foster dog may have been traumatized before he came to you. You will be teaching him that people are good and can be trusted. You should handle and work with him every day. If he shows any signs of aggression or fear, such as growling over food or toys, biting, or hiding, please contact your foster care coordinator.

Training

When you are training your foster dog, you are the leader. You provide the guidance and information he needs to succeed and build his confidence. Reward good behavior with praise. Redirect wrong behavior with a leash correction and a command like “leave it” or “off.” Leash corrections are quick snap and release movements. Your leash should move horizontally or parallel to the ground. Leash corrections should be more noisy and surprising to the dog than something that causes pain. The more you train, the less you'll need the leash correction and the dog will respond to just your voice. Be consistent with your terminology—“let's go” (walk), “sit,” “down,” “off” (for jumping on people), “down,” “stay,” “come,” “leave it” (don't touch it), “out” (out of mouth), and “kennel” (to go in crate). Dogs respond to your tone of voice and facial expressions. Say your commands with a deep voice—not loud—their hearing is excellent. Be patient and stay calm because your behavior will keep them calm. Dogs need and respond to praise, so use it frequently when doing obedience training. Never lose your temper with a foster dog or strike him, EVER. You must win his trust.

What you'll need for training

4-foot leash

Training collar (improperly referred to as a “choke collar”—when used incorrectly)



Smelly, tasty treats

Good books or videos (We have some excellent books at our adoption desk.)

Put your foster dog on a leash and training collar. (Remove training collars immediately after you are finished with your lesson because they can choke your dog to death if the chain catches on something.) Have your treats accessible. Consistency is the key to effective training. When you give a command, **say it only once**, and if he does not comply immediately, physically demonstrate the behavior you want him to perform. For example, if you say “sit,” hold a treat above his nose so that his head tilts up and his hindquarters go down into a sit position. If this does not work, gently but firmly push his rump down. Since there are delicate organs beneath his rear back, be very careful when pushing on his rump. You may want to avoid putting pressure on his back altogether and use your entire arm against the backs of his “knees” to make him bend his hind legs and sit. As soon as he sits praise him and give a treat and pet him gently and slowly for a few seconds. Always reward correct behavior with immediate praise.

Do not repeat commands, raise your voice, or yell at your foster dog while training. You will teach him that he does not have to respond to your commands. If a correction has to be given, it needs to be done when the “crime” is done or in the 1 to 2 seconds following—otherwise he will not know why he is being corrected. When he ceases the incorrect behavior, praise him immediately.

When you call your foster dog over to you, always make it a happy thing for him to do. Raise the pitch of your voice, and let your foster dog know you are happy and excited. He will come to join you. Praise him profusely when he arrives, for several seconds. NEVER, EVER, call a dog to punish him. If he has made a mistake, immediately go to him and give the correction. **IF YOU PUNISH A DOG WHEN HE COMES TO YOU, HE WILL BEGIN TO ASSOCIATE THE PUNISHMENT WITH COMING TO YOU.** If you call the dog and he comes—you must praise him because he did what you asked him to do.

Children

As a general rule, no children under 12 years old should be left alone and unsupervised with a dog. Do not allow children to do to the dog what you would not allow the child to do to a younger sibling. Teach children to leave a dog alone when he is eating, chewing, and sleeping.

Housetraining

Be patient with your foster dog. Even housetrained adult dogs will make mistakes—especially if they’ve been at the shelter for a long time and have been going to the bathroom in their kennel. Or if there are smells in your house from another dog or cat, some dogs may “mark” out their territory. This action should be re-directed immediately by a leash correction and a command and bringing the dog outside where he can finish. You will then want to use some odor neutralizer on the areas where the foster dog “marked” to insure that he will not smell that area again.

You can begin to housetrain a puppy at 8 weeks of age. Even if you bring home an adult dog that is housebroken, you will want to follow these guidelines for the first couple of weeks as the dog adjusts to his new situation and to your schedule.

Determine where you want your foster dog to eliminate—backyard, side yard, or newspaper. Don’t try to teach a puppy that it’s ok to eliminate on papers in the house AND in the yard at the same time—you’ll confuse him. Choose one, and if you choose papers, make sure he’s got that down pat before you change to the yard. When you have determined where he should do his business, take him to the same place every time, and tell him to “do his business.” Take him out when he wakes up, after he eats or drinks, after a play session, or at least every two hours. Puppies should go out every hour. Stand with him for 5 minutes. If he eliminates, praise him. If he doesn’t go in 5 minutes, take him back inside and try every 15 minutes until he goes.

While you are inside, supervise him closely. If he starts to go, scoop him up quickly and take him to the approved spot. Praise, praise, praise when he finishes. If he goes in the house while you are not paying attention, unless you



catch it within 1 or 2 seconds of the act, don't correct him—it's your fault. Clean it up and go back to your schedule. Use Nature's Miracle (odor neutralizer) to get rid of the smell. **Never put the dog's face in his mess, or yell at him after the fact. He won't understand you, and you will be teaching him to fear you.**

If your foster dog moves quickly, you might want to leave a leash on him while you are home. Let him drag it around the house. It will make it easier to catch him and take him outside. Do not leave the leash on the dog when you are not watching him.

Crate Training

Crates provide safe havens and dens for dogs. They calm them and can help prevent destructive chewing, barking, and housetraining mistakes. Puppies should not be crated for more hours than they are months old, plus one. (A four month old should not be crated longer than 5 hours). Adults can be crated for up to 9 hours—but keep in mind this is stressful, both physically and mentally for the dog. Rigorous exercise should be given before and after such a long period in the crate, and good chew toys should be in the crate at all times. You may want to crate your new foster dog for the first few nights in your bedroom—most of them feel more secure in their crate and it protects your house from accidents.

Crates are not to be used as a means of punishment for your foster dog. If used for punishing, the dog will learn to avoid going in the crate. Crates are not to be used for keeping puppies under 6 months old out of mischief all day either. Crates should be thought of as dog play rooms—just like children's play rooms, with games and toys. It should be a place dogs like to be.

Introducing the crate

Leave the crate in a central part of your home. First introduce your foster dog to his crate after a good walk, when he is tired and sleepy. Keep all of the dog's chew toys in the crate so that he can go in and out as he pleases, selecting toys to play with. Feed your dog in the crate with the door open. If the dog hesitates going in, place the bowl right inside the door so that their head is in and their body is outside.

If your foster dog still refuses to go near the crate, put the smelliest, tastiest wet food (or a steak!) in the crate and shut the door. Let the dog hang outside the crate for a while, smelling the food inside. Soon he should beg you to let him in!

Now that he is familiar and willing to go near the crate, throw some of his favorite treats in the crate. Let him go in and get them and come right out again. Do this exercise 3 or 4 times. Then, throw more treats in and let him go in and get them. When he is in, shut the door and give him another treat through the door. Then let him out and ignore him for 3 minutes. Then, put some more treats in the crate, let him go in, shut the door and feed him 5 bits of treats through the door, and then let him out and ignore him for 5 minutes.

Next time, put a bunch of treats and peanut butter or freeze-dried liver and honey in a Kong ball, so it is time-consuming to get the food out of the ball, and put the Kong ball in the crate. After your foster dog has gone in, shut the door. Talk to him in calm normal tones. The dog may whine or cry for a few minutes, but do not talk to him or you will reward the whining/crying/barking behavior. The foster dog must be quiet for a few minutes before you let him out. Before he has finished removing all the treats from the Kong ball (after about 10 minutes), let him out, take the Kong away, and ignore him for 5 minutes. The dog learns that all good things happen to him in the crate. **IT IS THE ONLY PLACE HE GETS TREATS AND TOYS** and his favorite human praises him and hangs out next to him while he is in the crate. His favorite human ignores him when he is outside the crate. Soon your foster dog will love his crate and want to hang out in it with the door open all the time.

Gradually increase the time in the crate until the dog can spend 3 to 4 hours in the crate. We recommend leaving a radio or TV on while the dog is in the crate, alone in the house. Rotate the dog's toys from day to day so that they don't become bored of them.

Do not put papers in the crate—the dog will instinctively not go to the bathroom where they sleep/live. Instead, put a blanket in his crate to endorse the fact that this is his cozy home.



Bedding

To help your foster dog get used to his crate, set up your foster dog's bed in his crate and put the crate in your bedroom. Place a comfortable bed in the crate. If you are fostering a puppy, you can try placing a warm hot-water bottle wrapped in a towel next to them. Warmth makes puppies sleepy. Make sure the sides of bedding are tucked in firmly so the puppies don't get lost or suffocated in a fold of the bedding. Be wary of dog crates during hot weather—a dog may want to lay on the cool floor, instead of the crate. Make sure the crate is not in direct sun.

Socialization/Playtime/Exercise

Lots of human contact is important for recovering, sick, injured or neglected dogs. Human handling is especially important for the healthy development of puppies.

Playtime is a reward for your foster dog. Be sure to give him several minutes of playtime periodically through the day. Do not play tug of war or wrestle with any dog, because this game may teach aggressive behaviors that we do not want the dog to learn. If you have a shy or fearful dog, do not throw the toy toward the dog, because he may think you are throwing things at him and become more fearful. After you have finished playing with a toy, put it away. You are controlling the toy and the playtime. When giving the dog a toy or treat, have him sit before giving it to him. That way he has to work to get the toy or treat—making the toy a reward.

Dogs should be exercised every day. A daily walk or run will release excess energy. A dog that is exercised regularly will tend to sleep when you are not at home—and a sleeping dog cannot do undesirable things, such as bark, chew, etc.

The more you can get your foster dog out into the world, the better socialized he will be. Get him used to different people and different environments. If you are a runner/jogger, puppies should not run with you as you exercise until they are one year old. Also, remember that your foster dog probably is not used to running regularly, and like a person, will have to improve his conditioning and stamina over a period of time to avoid injury.

If you are fostering a puppy, make sure he has lots of new experiences, so that he is well socialized and will be adaptable as an adult. Since it is best not to take puppies out in public until he is fully vaccinated, bring new experiences to him. Have friends over and invite children over to play (Always supervise playtime with children and dogs closely!). Take your foster puppy in car rides to see different environments and get used to the car. Keep in mind that puppies need to go to the bathroom frequently so be sure they eliminate before you go on a car ride, and keep the ride brief, since he will have to go again soon.

Off-leash Areas

You are welcome to take your foster dog to any of the completely fenced off-leash areas, such as Magnusson, Woodland Park, Genesee, or Golden Gardens. However, get to know your foster dog before doing so. Make sure that he gets along with other dogs. Wait until he has formed a bond with you so that you know he will come when called. All foster dogs are required to be on leash at all times, except when at off-leash areas. Do not bring puppies to off-leash areas. Puppies are not yet fully vaccinated and can pick up the Parvo virus through contact with feces and urine in areas where other dogs congregate.

MEDICAL CARE FOR DOGS/PUPPIES

Your foster dog may not display any signs of illness until he is quite ill. Therefore, it is up to you to observe your dog closely each day. Call your foster care coordinator if you see abnormal behavior, abnormal discharges from the eyes, nose, or other body openings, abnormal lumps, limping, difficulty getting up or down, loss of appetite, or abnormal waste elimination. If you have internet access, www.pets.com can offer useful information and advice.



Vaccination and worming

Your foster dog's vaccination and worming history will be given to you. Your dog has most likely been vaccinated for Distemper virus, canine Hepatitis virus, Leptospirosis, Parainfluenza virus, Parvo, Coronavirus, and Bordetella. Adult dogs are vaccinated once a year. Puppies may be vaccinated starting at 8 weeks of age and should be given boosters until they are 16 weeks old.

If you are fostering a puppy, come back to the shelter for the following vaccination boosters.

Vaccination recommendations for puppies:

8–10 weeks: DHLPPC and Bordetella vaccinations

11–13 weeks: DHLPPC vaccination

14–16 weeks: DHLPPC vaccination, Rabies

17–19 weeks: Parvo test

Annual boosters are recommended.



Worming directions for Dogs:

10 cc's of (Nemex=Strongid-T) wormer per pound. One time daily for 4 days. Repeat in 10 days.

Your foster dog has also most likely had one dose of wormer. If you see worms in the dog's stool, come back to the shelter for more wormer.

Minor Wounds

Ask the shelter for some *Nolvasan Skin and Wound Cleanser*. This mild cleanser will clean and soothe minor wounds and prevent infection. For serious wounds, (that might need stitches, etc.) consult with your foster care coordinator.

Fleas

Flea treatments are available if needed. Puppies younger than 4 months old should NOT be treated with toxic chemicals. Puppies over 8 weeks of age and adult dogs can be treated with Advantage or Revolution.

Flea treatments contain insecticides that can cause nerve and liver damage, impair the immune system, and even cause cancer. Regular flea combing is the best way to control and monitor the fleas. Vacuum all areas of your house that your foster dog uses at least every two to three days.

Fleas usually are found on animals who are ill and so, as with any illness, you will want to strengthen the overall health of the animal. As a rule, healthy animals are less likely to get fleas than sick ones. Good food, minimal stress, proper hygiene and TLC will most likely keep an animal from getting fleas. To check for fleas, inspect your dog daily—inspecting the rear groin, belly, tail, head, under chin and head and neck (common places for fleas). Look also for black specks of flea dirt, which is actually digested blood. Before you begin combing, get a bowl of tap water and put a few drops of dish soap in it. You can put any fleas you find in the water and they will drown. If you don't use soap, the fleas may swim to a fluff of fur and jump out of the water. If fleas are present, treat as soon as possible. Change bedding and vacuum the floors daily. The washing machine will remove fleas/eggs/dirt.

If your foster dog had fleas, watch his stools for "short pieces of white rice" that are tapeworms, which come from ingesting fleas. Tapeworms can cause diarrhea. If you see tapeworms, call your foster care coordinator, who can get you a single pill that will kill them.

Grooming

If your foster dog needs a bath, you may use the grooming room and hair dryer at the shelter, or ask the staff for a 1/2 price coupon to Rub A Dub Dog on Phinney Ridge, or use your tub at home. If you bathe your dog, make sure



that he is completely dry and doesn't get a chill—especially if it is winter or if he has a cold. Don't let him go outside for long periods of time until he is dry. Bathing your foster dog is a great bonding experience and a good way of telling the personality and temperament of the dog. All dogs and puppies should be brushed daily, since grooming is a great way to establish trust. You should handle your foster dog's paws, mouth, and ears so that you get him used to being handled. Grooming should feel good to your foster dog—look for a soft brush or one made completely of plastic—which is terrific for massage and shampooing.

Kennel Cough

The most common reason dogs go into foster care is because they have kennel cough, or the equivalent of a human "cold." The shelter is much like a child day care or an office/work setting—where once one dog has a cold, all the dogs in the shelter get colds. Just like humans with colds, kennel cough develops when the dog is stressed out or when his immune system is compromised. Usually, kennel cough goes away as soon as the dog has a warm, quiet, and soothing place to sleep—where he can drink lots of water, eat healthy food, and receive lots of TLC!

Kennel cough is typically a dry, hacking cough. There may be some discharge from the nose and a clear liquid that is coughed up. It is generally a mild, self-limiting illness of the trachea and bronchi encountered in all age groups of dogs, but especially in those under unusual stress, crowding, or close confinement. Kennel cough exists in shelters, boarding kennels, groomers, veterinary offices, off-leash areas, etc.

Is Kennel cough contagious?

It is contagious, and dogs with kennel cough should not go to off-leash areas until they are over their cough. If you have a dog at home and plan to foster a dog with kennel cough, we have found that if your own dog is healthy and has been vaccinated annually, then your own dog will most likely not get sick. There is a human "flu shot" equivalent for dogs that you might want to consider. Talk to your vet about giving your own dog the Bordetella nasal vaccination. Immunity to kennel cough is usually established 3–4 days after vaccination.

We can compare this situation with humans in an office atmosphere—if you are healthy and well-rested and your immune system is not compromised, and a co-worker has a cold, then you will not catch the cold. But if you are worn-down, stressed out, and not eating or sleeping well, you probably will catch the cold. So if you own a dog that is ill or older, we would not recommend fostering a dog with kennel cough.

Treatment for kennel cough: bed rest and doggie videos! Make sure your foster dog has plenty of fresh water and healthy food. If your dog is not eating, try cooking up something special and smelly—like eggs, chicken, steak, etc. Take short, leashed walks. If your dog's energy is good and the cough seems mild, try some vitamin C (5–10 mg/lb, two to three times a day with food), and vitamin E (3–5 mg/lb, once a day).

If you don't see improvement of the cough or cold after three days, OR if the condition worsens, call your foster care coordinator. Dogs rarely develop a fever and lethargy with kennel cough—in fact, it can be a problem keeping them quiet. Too much or strenuous activity can bring on coughing episodes, so be sure to limit activity and encourage rest. Even baths can be too stressful to the system and should be avoided. Incubation of kennel cough is 5–10 days; its course is 10–20 days with symptoms generally more marked the first week. Fever, lack of appetite, and a yellow-green-brown nasal discharge can indicate secondary infections. If any of these symptoms occur, call your foster care coordinator.

Diarrhea

Diarrhea can be caused by several factors—stress, change of diet, poor diet, eating garbage, parasites, and viruses. If your foster dog has diarrhea and has no other symptoms, rule out change of diet by feeding your dog cooked rice mixed with cottage cheese (two cups rice to one cup cottage cheese) for a day or two. Then reintroduce the dry kibble. Provide plenty of fresh water, since diarrhea can cause dehydration. To check for dehydration, pull the skin up over the shoulder blades. If it snaps back quickly, the dog is not dehydrated. If the skin goes down slowly, then the dog is dehydrated and needs fluids. Dehydration can kill a puppy. If you suspect your foster puppy is dehydrated, call your foster care coordinator immediately.



Parvo

Parvo attacks the intestinal tract, white blood cells, and the heart muscle. The signs of infection are depression, loss of appetite, vomiting, severe diarrhea, fever, and sometimes kennel cough/cold symptoms. The illness is contracted through contact with the infected feces of another dog. This is why you must not take your foster puppy out to public places where other dogs have been until he has completed his vaccine series against the disease. This virus can be deadly, so call your foster care coordinator immediately if you believe your foster dog may have this illness.

Distemper

Distemper is an extremely contagious and often fatal viral disease. Over 50% of dogs and 80% of puppies that contract the virus die from it. It is an airborne infection that can be transmitted with or without direct contact with an infected dog. It can also be transmitted through mucous, urine, and feces. Some of the symptoms include squinting, congestion of the eyes, pus from the eyes, weight loss, coughing, vomiting, nasal discharge, and diarrhea. This disease is another reason why foster puppies should not go out to parks. Call your foster care coordinator immediately if you suspect Distemper.

Parasites

Parasites can cause diarrhea and stomach bloating or vomiting. Parasites include tapeworms, round worms, hookworms, and mange. Tapeworms will look like pieces of rice coming out of your foster dogs' anus or in his stool. Round and hookworms may be vomited, and roundworms look like spaghetti. Mange is an infestation of tiny mites that bite and cause intense scratching, reddened skin and loss of fur. Only rare cases of mange are contagious to humans. If you suspect your foster dog has parasites, call your foster care coordinator to get a fecal test done by a vet. Once diagnosed, parasites are easily medicated and treated.

SPECIAL CASES

Behavior Case fostering

Socializing

These cases will generally have very specific needs regarding behavior/training/socializing, and a shelter staff member or volunteer will be available for consultation. For example, a dog with a behavior problem may need work, a fearful dog may need socializing/confidence building, or a dog with an unknown/questionable history may just need to be observed in someone's home before being adopted.

Submissive Peeing

If your foster dog urinates when you come near him, he may be peeing out of fear. Something in his past history has caused him to be fearful. If, after following these guidelines, the peeing does not improve, consult your foster care coordinator because occasionally submissive peeing is a result of a bladder infection.

To cure submissive peeing, the dog's reaction to interactions triggering the urination need to be changed. If the behavior is submissive, owners should avoid using postures or gestures that dogs typically view as threatening. These include

- Direct eye contact
- Bending over the dog
- Reaching toward the dog, especially over the head
- Hugging the dog
- Approaching the dog directly, head on (front to front)

Instead, people should look off to the side when approaching the dog, bend at the knees or sit on the floor, make no arm or hand movements toward the dog, and if the dog approaches to sniff a hand, pet the dog under the chin, not over the head.



It is important to be really calm around this kind of dog. No playing, no excited voices—be very sedate when greeting the dog. If the dog jumps up, just move away for a moment, ignore him, then bend down or sit on the floor and talk very quietly to the dog, pet him under the chin, give him a treat; then get up, walk away and ignore him again. Basically you are just redirecting his energy to being calm on the floor and getting a treat. “OFF” won't work with this type of dog—he sees that command as punishment and will pee. Don't punish him, or the peeing will continue.

Separation Anxiety

If your foster dog barks, howls, eliminates in the house after being housetrained, chews things while you are gone, or self mutilates by chewing on himself, he may be displaying separation anxiety. It is usually a result of being bored and lonely. Consider your schedule. Are you leaving him alone for long periods of time? Are you exercising him enough? Does he need another canine companion? Make sure you leave plenty of chew toys to keep him busy. Dogs are pack animals and do not like to be left alone. Proper exercise, some training and play time, a consistent routine, and chew toys can help alleviate feelings of anxiety toward being alone. Leave the TV on when you are gone. Leave and come back into your house often. Ignore the dog for 10 minutes before you leave and for 10 minutes after your arrive home. Crate training is a useful tool to help calm a dog who is alone. Be patient and consistent and **DO NOT** punish the dog for what he has done to your house while you have been away.

Injured Dogs

Injured foster dogs will have specific needs. They will most likely be recovering from surgery and will come with veterinary orders. Generally fracture, cast, or other surgery patients may need to be confined to a crate to limit mobility (or to a small room.) This type of foster situation usually necessitates several visits to the vet. Be sure that your schedule allows such appointments. As with all fosters, watch for signs of illness, since injured foster dogs are under additional stress and are more prone to illness. Lots of human contact is important for healing injured dogs. Active play should be limited, but cuddling, petting, talking, brushing, and massaging are all good social activities for a recovering animal.





MOM DOG WITH PUPPIES (PUPPIES 0 - 4 WEEKS)

A small, quiet, warm, easily cleaned room (laundry room, bathroom, family room, kitchen, or dry and warm basement or garage) is best for a mother and pups. Clean bedding should be provided, and food and water nearby. A child's plastic baby pool, lined with a blanket makes a wonderful, safe den for mama and babies. The mother dog should be allowed outside on leash (or supervised in a fenced yard) twice daily to eliminate. The puppies should not go out at all. If the mother's history is unknown, she will not be vaccinated at the shelter. Be aware of other dogs and other dogs' feces when taking the mother out for a walk, since she may not be properly vaccinated. The mother will spend most of her time early on nursing, cleaning up, and caring for her pups. Later, as the pups become more mobile and less demanding on her, she may enjoy more time away from them and active play with people and chew toys. As pups become more mobile, check their living area for hazards.

Feeding

The mother dog requires extra nutrition for adequate milk production. Feed a premium diet three times a day. Be sure all the puppies are nursing and steadily gaining weight. Newborns depend entirely on mom's milk, receiving valuable antibodies in the first milk (colostrum). When the puppies are three weeks old, begin offering a low bowl (a pie plate) of water-soaked kibble (puppy chow). Be sure to offer this at a time when the puppies are hungry, and, if necessary, separate the mom so she won't eat it all up. By four weeks of age they should be eating some mushy meals. (See the next section on Weaning Orphan Puppies.) By six weeks of age puppies should no longer need mother's milk and should be eating soaked kibble and starting on dry kibble.

Medical Care

Call your foster care coordinator if you see any signs of illness in mother or pups. If the mother dog goes off food



or is stressed, milk production may drop sharply, and puppies may have to be raised as orphans. Check mother's mammary glands daily. As long as pups all nurse and gain weight, production is probably adequate. If milk production or mother's calcium reserves are inadequate, the mother may develop eclampsia, is an emergency situation of low blood calcium levels requiring immediate attention. Symptoms are muscle twitching, tremors, anxiousness, progressive to stiffening seizure-like tremors. A hard, red, hot, or painful mammary gland may mean mastitis which should be checked by a veterinarian. Nursing mothers often "blow their coat" when nursing due to nutrition demands on their body; feeding premium diet in adequate amounts helps avoid this situation. Vitamin supplements can also help. The mother's vaginal discharge (lochia) should taper from dark mucoid green to reddish brown in smaller amounts by three weeks postpartum. Routine medical treatments (for mother) include Nemex #2 wormer 10 days after the first wormer was given. The mother should be vaccinated as soon as she is finished nursing. Check the pups' umbilical cords daily until they dry and fall off. Eyes open at 7–10 days—watch for infections/crusting at the lids. If you see fleas, ask your vet for advice on treating the newborns.

The puppies should receive their first dose of deworming medicine, Nemex, at 2–3 weeks of age, followed by a second dose in 10 days. Dewormer will be provided for you. At 8 weeks of age the pups should receive their first set of shots.

Socializing

Be aware that mama dog may be protective of her pups, but most mother dogs will allow a calm, gentle approach by adults and picking up/handling of pups. Puppies need a lot of human contact. Handle them as much as you can.

ORPHAN PUPPIES (0 - 3 WEEKS)

What you will need:

Box or Carrier

Towels

Wash cloths

Esbilac or similar formula

A/D or baby food

Bottles & Nipples

Small syringes

Dishes with low sides (pie plates)

Hot water bottle or Heating pad

Timer/ticking clock

Flea comb

Baby Shampoo

Kaopectate

Possibly a kitchen scale that weighs in 1 oz increments

Since the mother is not available, the foster parent must provide all of the mother's functions: feeding, warmth, cleaning, and stimulation to urinate/defecate.

Safety/Confinement

These pups should be set up in small living quarters (crate or box with bedding) easily kept consistently warm—at about 80–90 degrees. They will pile on each other to keep warm, but a hot water bottle and warm bedding are needed. Heating pads can be dangerous. If used, they should be kept on low, with several layers of bedding between the pad and pups, and they should be monitored closely.

Feeding

Puppy milk replacer such as Vet-alac or Esbilac, should be mixed and fed according to the package directions. Generally, feeding every three hours is needed in the beginning. By three weeks of age, feeding every 4–5 hours with a night break of eight hours should work well. Milk replacer can be fed by dropper or syringe or bottle as pups accept it and need larger feedings. Some of the pups may be too weak to suck from the bottle and you will need to feed them with syringes. If you need to syringe feed the puppies, drip the formula slowly into the side of their



mouths, and give them time to swallow. Going too fast can cause liquid to go into their lungs and cause pneumonia. Do not hold pups on their backs either, or allow them to suck too fast (can lead to aspiration of formula into the lungs). The puppies should be tilted forward and slightly up, as if they were nursing on their mother. Never try to bottle feed an unconscious or semi-conscious puppy. Feed until the puppy's tummy feels tight and full. Sick puppies will not eat eagerly, and you will have to feed them slowly and often to ensure that they are getting enough food.

After each feeding, you must stimulate bowel and bladder movement. Use a warm, damp cotton ball, or later a cloth as volume increases). Mineral oil on a Q-tip at the anus may stimulate defecation. Gently massage their genital areas in a circular motion, and do not stop until they have finished eliminating. Note the color of the urine. If it is light yellow or straw colored, that is normal. If it is a bright canary yellow, the puppy is dehydrated and needs fluids immediately. Cottage cheesy stools or diarrhea are also an indication of illness. Call your foster care coordinator if you see these symptoms.

As your pups grow and become more mobile, weaning time approaches. Weaning can be started at three weeks by offering formula in a low dish or pie plate with or without canned food mixed in. Be sure to offer when puppies are hungry, so they will make their best effort to lap/lick/eat. Supplement with bottle feedings as needed until pups are lapping consistently from a dish. By 4–5 weeks no more bottle feedings should be needed. At four weeks, offer water soaked kibble with or without canned food mixed in or formula added. (Water penetrates kibble better; soaking in formula does not work as well). Begin offering dry food at five weeks when the puppies are hungry near meal time so they will start to try the dry food. Continue feeding soaked kibble until seven weeks or so. By eight weeks, the puppies should readily eat dry food only.

Medical Care

If signs of illness develop in the pups, notify your foster care coordinator. Lack of appetite and diarrhea are of special concern. Check umbilical cords daily until they dry and fall off. Eyes open at 7–10 days—watch for infections/crusting at the lids. Newborns without a mom may also try to nurse on each other causing injury (genitalia are the common site for this false “nipple”). Pups may need to be separated if this occurs. Deworming should occur at 2–3 weeks of age with Nemex which will be provided for you. A second dose should happen in 10 days. If fleas are found, call your vet for advice in treating newborns. From birth on, puppies must be kept clean and flea free. Fleas can kill a puppy and cause anemia. Daily flea combing is usually enough, but you should be prepared to bathe them if necessary. At 8 weeks of age, the pups should get their first set of vaccinations.

Cleaning

Initially, newborn pups should be kept in a box or crate, and bedding should be changed as needed. The process of stimulating urination/defecation, then cleaning or soaking up urine/feces with cotton or cloth should keep puppies fairly clean. As pups become more mobile and learn to urinate/defecate on their own, a larger box or small, papered, gated area like a kitchen or bathroom may be used to confine them. Keep area free of feces/urine. The weaning process (low dish of mushy food) can make for messy feet and faces—wash with a warm wet cloth as needed. If you must bathe the puppies, make sure they are thoroughly dried after bathing, to avoid chilling, which can lead to illness.

Socializing

Handle newborn pups as much as possible to get them comfortable with humans.

Puppy Development

It is important to start handling and manipulating the puppies right from birth. Although their ears and eyes are still sealed, their sense of smell is already relatively well developed. The wild stress they may experience when being picked up accelerates body growth, reduces emotionality and possibly increases their resistance to certain diseases. Moreover, they become imprinted to human scent.

The growing puppies should be handled every day, and gentle grooming should be started at 4–5 weeks. As they become more aware of their environment, they should be exposed to as many stimuli as possible (vacuum cleaner, young children, men, women, other friendly animals, loud noises, etc.). However, you must pay attention that they do



not become too stressed, over-stimulated, or tired. Short car trips will get puppies used to traveling. At first all puppies should experience things by themselves to learn to cope with life later on.

If the mother is not available, it is important that the puppies come in contact with an older, friendly dog from about 5 weeks of age on. They have to learn how to communicate like a dog and most importantly, how to submit. A puppy who has not learned submission from its mother or another adult dog will be more difficult to train later on. At this age, it is also very important that the puppy learn bite inhibition. He learns it best from his litter mates and from his mother or other adult dog.

From the age of 8 weeks on, the puppy is ready to learn “human” language and the rules of human society. Socialization with other dogs and humans has to be continued. With any introduction, be aware of the possibility of transmission of infectious disease—use good judgement.

Puppy Development			
AGE	NEEDS	MENTAL CAPABILITY	NOTES
1–3 weeks	Warmth Food Sleep Dependent on mother	Reflex behavior Needs stimulation to eliminate Cannot regulate body temperature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be handled gently for brief periods of time • Sense of smell is functioning • Will imprint on humans • Littermates important
4–7 weeks	Food Sleep Mother for discipline	Ears/eyes open All senses functioning Aware of environment Responding to stimuli Eliminate on their own Temperature regulation has improved Begin weaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence of littermates increases • Interaction with mates necessary to learn bite inhibition • Regular handling • Exposure to people, animals, and noises • Begin to form social attachments with other species • Provide sensory rich environment
8–12 weeks	Continued socialization Play	Fully weaned Mental capacity fully developed Can learn basic commands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learns dog language from mates and adult dogs • Learns submission from mother <p>**Most sensitive period in pup's development: what it experiences now remains for life</p>

HOW TO TAKE A PUPPY/DOG'S TEMPERATURE

You will need:

- Rectal thermometer
- Vaseline
- Disinfectant (30:1 water & bleach solution)

A normal temperature for dogs and puppies is 101–102.5 degrees. Any temperature below 100 degrees or above 103 degrees is a problem. Call your foster care coordinator immediately.

If a puppy has a temperature below 100 degrees, get him onto a heating pad (turned to low and covered with a towel) immediately. If the temperature is 103 degrees or higher, and the puppy has been on a heating pad, remove him from the pad immediately.

To take the dog/puppy's temperature:

- Sterilize the thermometer by dipping it into the disinfectant solution.
- Dry with a clean paper towel.
- Shake the thermometer down to under 80 degrees.
- Coat the tip of the thermometer with a small amount of Vaseline.
- Insert the tip of the thermometer 1/2 inch into the dog's rectum and hold there for 1–2 minutes. Be gentle, as the rectal tissues are fragile, and you don't want to tear the tissue.
- You may need a second person to help hold the dog or puppy to prevent struggling. You should be speaking softly to the dog. If a second person is helping, sometimes it is helpful to stroke the dog around the head to distract him from what is going on in the other direction.
- Be sure to sterilize the thermometer again when finished.

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS THAT ARE POISONOUS TO ANIMALS

Remove any rat or mouse poisonings and windshield wiper fluid from your house before fostering!!!!!!!!!!!!

(Those printed in all caps can be fatal)

Alcohol	Caladium	Four-o'clocks	Mountain laurel
ALMONDS	CALLA LILLY	FOXGLOVE	Narcissus
Amaryllis bulb	Castor bean	GARLIC	OLEANDER
Anthurium	Cherry	Hyacinth bulbs	ONION
APRICOT	CHINESE SACRED	HYDRANGEA	PEACH
ASPIRIN	OR HEAVENLY BAMBOO	Holly berries	PENCIL CACTUS
AUTUMN CROCUS	CHOCOLATE	Iris corms	Philodendron
Avocado	CHOKE CHERRY	JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT	Pointsetta
Azalea	Chrysanthemum	JIMSON WEED	Potato
BEGONIA	Clematis	Kalanchoe	Rhododendron
Bird of paradise	Crocus bulb	LANTANA	Rhubarb leaves
Bittersweet	Croton	Lilly	Rosary Pea
BLEEDING HEART	Daffodil	LILLY OF THE VALLEY	Schefflera
Boxwood	Delphinium, larkspur	Lupine species	Shamrock
Bracken Fern	Dumb cane	MARIJUANA OR HEMP	Spurge
Buckeye	Elderberry	MILKWEED	Tomatoes
Buttercup	English Ivy	MISTLETOE BERRIES	YEW
Caffeine	Fig	MORNING GLORY	



CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU!

Your foster animal has been adopted! You have found him/her a permanent home that might even be better than yours—if that is possible! Congratulations, you have just saved a life. The staff and volunteers at Seattle Animal Shelter greatly appreciate your time, energy, and dedication. Please let us know if there is anything we can do for you. We would also love to hear feedback about our program. On behalf of all of the animals at Seattle Animal Shelter who have survived due to the foster care program—we thank you!



“Cain” (far right), foster dog, takes a ride to the park with his canine foster brothers. Having a foster dog is great fun for the whole pack!



SEATTLE ANIMAL CONTROL